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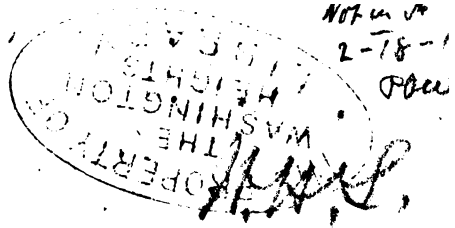


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THE



NEIGHBOURS.

A Story of Every-day Life.

BY FREDERIKA BREMER.

TRANSLATED FROM THE SWEDISH,

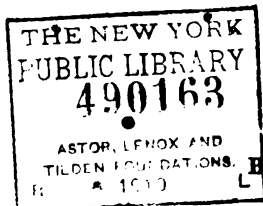
BY MARY HOWITT.



NEW-YORK:

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1844.



PREFACE,

BY THE TRANSLATOR.

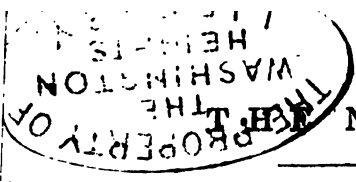
Of the rich treasure of intellect and literature in Sweden, little or nothing is known in England. To give a specimen of what exists there, even in the department of living story and scenes of society, I have selected this work of Frederika Bremer, which is one of a series of four: "The Neighbours," "The House," "The President's Daughters," and "Nina." "The Neighbours" has not been first chosen on the principle of presenting the best first, in order to excite expectation, but as believing it a fair and average example. Some of the others possess, unquestionably, a stronger interest in the narrative, and, perhaps, more masterly exposition of character. They are, in my opinion, most admirable in their lessons of social wisdom; in their life of relation; in their playful humour; and in all those qualities which can make writing acceptable to the fireside circle of the good and refined. Frederika Bremer is, indeed, the Miss AUSTEN of Sweden. Her father was an eminent merchant, and

since the death of her parents she has resided alternately in Stockholm, and with a female friend in the South of Sweden. She has consequently seen much of the society and scenery of her native land, and no one can sketch these with more graphic truth and vivacity. Since the writings of their great poet Tegnér, no productions have created such a sensation in Sweden; and abroad they have flown far and wide; have been read with avidity in various parts of the Continent, and in Germany alone three editions have appeared in rapid succession.

I take this opportunity to announce, that if my own countrymen, and especially countrywomen, give this work an equal welcome, the others are ready for publication, and will be issued as speedily as may be required. In any case, I shall be grateful to the author for the perusal of them, for they have certainly both highly amused me and done my heart good.

M. H

Heidelberg, September, 1842.



CHAPTER I.

FRANZISKA WERNER TO MARIA B.—

Rosenvik, 1st June, 18—.

HERE I am now, my dear Maria, under my own roof, at my own writing-table, and sitting by my own Bear. And who is Bear? you ask; who should it be but my own husband, whom I call Bear, because the name suits him so well?

Here, then, I am, sitting by the window; the sun is setting; two swans swim in the lake, and make furrows in its clear mirror; three cows—my cows—stand on the green shore quite sleek and reflective, thinking certainly upon nothing. How handsome they are! Now comes the maid with her milk-pail; how rich and good is country milk! But what, in fact, is not good in the country? Air and rain, food and feeling, heaven and earth, all is fresh and animated.

But now I must conduct you into my dwelling—no, I will begin yet farther off. There, on that hill, in Smaland, several miles off, whence I first looked into the valley where Rosenvik lies, behold a dust-covered carriage, within which sits the Bear and his little wife. That little wife looks forth with curiosity, for before her lies a valley beautiful in the light of evening. Green woods stretch out below, and surround crystal lakes; corn-fields in silken waves encircle gray mountains, and white buildings gleam out with friendly aspects among the trees. Here and there, from the wood-covered heights, pillars of smoke ascend to the clear evening heaven; they might have been mistaken for volcanoes, but they were only peaceful *svedjen*.* Truly it was beautiful, and I was charmed; I bent myself forward, and was thinking on a certain happy, natural family in Paradise, one Adam and Eve, when suddenly the Bear laid his great paws upon me, and held me so tight; that I was nearly giving up the ghost, while he kissed me, and besought me to find pleasure in what was here. I was the least in the world angry, but, as I knew the heart-impulse of this embrace, I made myself tolerably contented.

Here, then, in this valley lay my stationary home, here lived my new family, here lay Rosenvik, here should I and my husband live together. We descended the hill, and the carriage rolled rapidly along the level road, while, as we advanced, he told whose property was this and whose was that, whether near or remote. All was to me like a dream, out of which I was suddenly awoke by his saying, with a peculiar accent, "Here lives *Ma chère mère*," and at the same moment the carriage drove into a courtyard, and drew up at the door of a large, handsome stone house.

"What, must we alight here?" I asked.

"Yes, my love," was his reply.

This was to me by no means an agreeable surprise; I would much rather have gone on to my own house; much rather have made some preparation for this first meeting with my husband's mother, of whom I stood in great awe, from the anecdotes I had heard of her, and the respect which her stepson had for her. This visit seemed to me quite *mal-a-propos*; but my husband had his

own ideas, and, as I glanced at him, I saw that it was no time for opposition.

It was Sunday, and, as the carriage drew up, I heard the sound of a violin.

"Aha!" said Lars Anders, for such is my husband's Christian name, "so much the better!" he leaped heavily from the carriage, and helped me out also. There was no time to think about boxes or packages; he took my hand and led me up the steps, along the entrance hall, and drew me towards the door, whence proceeded the sounds of music and dancing.

"Only see," thought I, "how is it possible for me to dance in this costume?"

Oh, if I could only have gone in somewhere, just to wipe the dust from my face and my bonnet, where, at the very least, I could just have seen myself in a looking-glass! But impossible! Bear led me by the arm, insisting that I looked most charmingly, and beseeching me to make a looking-glass of his eyes. I was obliged to be so very uncourteous as to reply that they were quite too small for that purpose; on which account, he declared they were only the brighter, and then opened the door of the ballroom.

"Now," exclaimed I, in a kind of lively despair, "if you take me to a ball, you Bear, I'll make you dance with me."

"With a world of pleasure!" cried he; and in the same moment we two stood in the hall, when my terror was considerably abated by finding that the great room contained merely a number of cleanly-dressed servants, men and women, who leaped about lustily with one another, and who were so occupied with their dancing as scarcely to perceive us. Lars Anders led me to the upper end of the room, where I saw, sitting upon a high seat, a very tall and strong-built gentlewoman, who was playing with remarkable fervour upon a violin, and beating time to her music with great power. Upon her head was a tall and extraordinary cap, which I may as well call a helmet, because this idea came into my head at the first glance, and, after all, I can find no better name for it. This was the Generalin (wife of the General) Mansfield, stepmother of my husband, *Ma chère mère*, of whom I had heard so much.

She turned instantly her large dark brown eyes upon us, ceased playing, laid down her violin, and arose with a proud bearing, but with, at the same time, a happy and open countenance. I trembled a little, made a deep courtesy, and kissed her hand; in return, she kissed my forehead, and, for a moment, looked on me so keenly as compelled me to cast down my eyes; whereupon she kissed me most cordially on mouth and forehead, and embraced me as warmly as her stepson. And now came his turn; he kissed her hand most reverentially, but she presented her cheek; they regarded each other with the most friendly expression of countenance, she saying, in a loud, manly voice, the moment afterward, "You are welcome, my dear friends; it is very handsome of you to come here to me before you have been to your own house; I thank you for it. I might, it is true, have received you better, if I could have made preparations; but, at all events, this I know, that a welcome is the best dish." I hope, my friends, that you will remain over the evening with me.

* *Svedjen*, *svedjen*, *svedja*, the burning of turf in the fields, which, in many parts of Sweden, is used for dressing the land.

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My husband excused us, saying that we wished to reach home soon; that I was fatigued with the journey; but that we could not pass Carlsfors without paying our respects to *Ma chère mère*.

"Nay, good, good!" said she, apparently satisfied, "we will soon have more talk within; but first I must speak a few words with these people here. Listen, good friends!" and *Ma chère mère* struck the back of the violin with the bow, till a general silence prevailed through the hall. "My children," continued she, in a solemn tone, "I have something to say to you—the hangman! wilt thou not be quiet there below—I have to tell you, that my beloved son, Lars Anders Werner, takes home his wife, this Franziska Buren, whom you see standing by his side. Marriages are determined in heaven, my children, and we will now pray Heaven to bless its work in the persons of this couple. This evening we will drink together a *skål** to their well-being. So now you can dance, my children. Olof, come here and play thy very best."

While a murmur of exultation and good wishes ran through the assembly, *Ma chère mère* took me by the hand and led me, together with my husband, into another room, into which she ordered punch and glasses to be brought; then placing both her elbows firmly upon the table, and supporting her chin on her closed fists, she looked at me with a gaze which was rather dark than friendly. Lars Anders, who saw that this review was rather embarrassing to me, began to speak of the harvest, and other country affairs; *Ma chère mère*, however, sighed several times so deeply, that her sighs rather resembled groans; and then, as it were, constraining herself, answered to his observations.

The punch came, and then, filling the glass, she said, with earnestness in tone and countenance, "Son, and son's wife, your health!"

After this she became more friendly, and said, in a jesting tone, which, by-the-by, suited her extremely well, "Lars Anders, I suppose we must not say, 'You have bought the calf in the sack.' Your wife does not look amiss, and she 'has a pair of eyes fit to buy fish with.' She is little, very little, one must confess, but 'little and bold often push the great ones aside.'"

I laughed, *Ma chère mère* did the same, and I began to talk and act quite at my ease. We talked for some time very merrily together, and I related several little travelling adventures, which appeared to amuse her. In an hour's time we rose to take our leave, and *Ma chère mère* said, with a most friendly smile, "However agreeable it is to me to see you, I will not detain you this evening. I can very well understand how the 'at home' draws you. Remain at home over to-morrow if you will, but the day after come and eat your dinner with me; for the rest, you very well know that you will at all times be welcome. Now fill your glasses, and come and drink with the people. Trouble man may keep to himself, but pleasure he must enjoy in company."

We followed *Ma chère mère*, who had gone as herald, into the dancing-room; they were all standing, as we entered, with filled glasses, and she spoke something after this manner: "One must never triumph before one is over the brook, but if people sail in the ship of matrimony with prudence, and in the fear of God, there is a proverb which says 'well begun is half won'; and therefore, my friends, we will drink a *skål* to the

new-married couple whom you see before you, and wish, not only for them, but for those who come after them, that they may forever have place in the garden of the Lord!"

"*Skål! Skål!*" resounded on all sides. Lars Anders and I drank, and then went round and shook hands with so many people that my head was quite dizzy.

All this over, we prepared for our departure, and then came *Ma chère mère* to me on the steps with a packet, or, rather, a bundle, in her hand, saying, in the most friendly manner, "Take these veal cutlets with you, children, for breakfast to-morrow morning. In a while you will fatten and eat your own veal; but, daughter-in-law, don't forget one thing, let me have my napkin back again! Nay, you shall not carry it, dear child, you have quite enough to do with your bag (*pirat*) and your cloak. Lars Anders must carry the veal cutlets;" and then, as if he were a little boy still, she gave him the bundle, and showed him how he must carry it: all which he did as she bade him, and still her last words were, "Don't forget, now, that I have my napkin back!"

I glanced, full of amazement, at my husband, but he only smiled, and helped me into the carriage. After all, I was quite satisfied to have made the acquaintance of *Ma chère mère* in so impromptu a manner; for I felt that, if it had been more solemn and premeditated, her bearing and her scrutiny would, perhaps, have had more effect upon me.

As to the veal cutlets, I could not but rejoice over them, for I could not tell in what state I might find the provision-room at Rosenvik. Right glad, also, was I to arrive "at home," and to see a maid-servant and a ready-prepared bed, for we had travelled that day ten miles (Swedish), and I was greatly fatigued. I had slept a little on the quarter-of-a-mile way, between Carlsfors and Rosenvik, and the twilight had come on so rapidly that, as about eleven o'clock at night we arrived at home, I was unable to see what my Eden resembled. The house seemed, however, to me somewhat gray, and small in comparison of the one we had just left; but that was of no consequence, Lars Anders was so cordially kind, and I was so cordially sleepy. But, all at once, I was wide awake, for, as I entered, it seemed to me like a fairy tale. I stepped into a handsome, well-lighted room, in the middle of which stood a nicely-arranged tea-table, glittering with silver and china, while beside the tea-table stood the very neatest of maid-servants, in that pretty holiday dress which is peculiar to the peasant girls of this country.

I uttered an exclamation of delight, and all sleep at once was gone. In a quarter of an hour I was quite ready, and sat down as hostess at the tea-table, admiring the beautiful table-cloth, the teacups, the teapot, the teaspoons, upon which were engraved our joint initials, and served tea to my husband, who seemed happy to his heart's core.

And thus the morning and the evening were the first day.

The next morning, as I opened my eyes, I saw that my Adam was directing his eyes, with an expression of great devotion, towards the window, where a ray of sunshine streamed in through a hole in the blue-striped window-curtains, while, at the same time, the mewing of a cat might be heard.

* *Dricka skål*, to drink a health.

"My beloved husband!" I began, solemnly, "I thank you for the beautiful music which you have prepared for my welcome. I conjecture you have a troop of country girls, all dressed in white, to scatter twigs of fir before my feet. I will soon be ready to receive them."

"I have arranged something much better than this oldfashioned pageantry," said he, merrily. "In association with a great Artist, I have prepared a panorama, which will show you how it looks in Arabia Deserta. You need only to lift up these curtains."

You may imagine, Maria, that I was soon at the window—with a sort of sacred awe drew aside the curtains. Ah, Maria, there lay before me, in the full glory of the morning, a crystal lake; green meadows and groves lay around, and in the middle of the lake a small island, upon which grew a magnificent oak: over all the sun shone brightly, and all was so peaceful, so paradisaical, in its beauty, that I was enchanted, and, for the first moment, could not speak; I could only fold my hands, while tears filled my eyes.

"May you be happy here!" whispered Lars Anders, and clasped me to his heart.

"I am happy, too happy!" said I, deeply moved, "and grateful."

"Do you see the island, that little Svano?" asked he: "I will row you often there on a summer's evening; we will take our evening meal with us, and eat it there."

"Why not breakfast?" inquired I, suddenly fired with the idea; "why not to-day, in this beautiful morning, go and drink our coffee? I will immediately—"

"No, not this morning," interrupted he, laughing at my earnestness; "I must go into the city and visit my patients."

"Ah!" exclaimed I, in a tone of vexation, "what a thing it is that people cannot remain in health!"

"What, then, should I do?" asked he, in a sort of comic terror.

"Row me over to Svano," was my reply.

"I shall be back," said he, "for dinner, about three o'clock, and then we can—that cursed hole there above," said he, "I could not have believed that the curtains had been so torn—"

"That hole shall remain as long as I am here," exclaimed I, with enthusiasm, interrupting him; "never would I forget that through that hole I first saw sunshine at Rosenvik! But tell," inquired I, "what old fortress is that which one sees across the lake there, so gray in the distance? there, where the wood is so black?"

"That is Ramm," replied he; "a great country-seat."

"And who lives there?" I asked.

"Nobody at this moment," he replied. "Fifteen years ago it belonged to *Ma chère mère*; but she did not find herself comfortable there, so she removed to Carlafors, and sold Ramm. The estate was purchased by peasants, who now cultivate the land, but the fine house and park are falling to decay. People say that at present it is rented for the summer by a foreigner, who wishes to hunt in the country; and a fine opportunity has he to do so in the park itself, which is above a mile (Swedish) in circuit, and in which, during their long-undisturbed rest, game of all kinds has wonderfully increased. Sometimes we'll go and look about there; but now, my little wife, I must have my breakfast, and then say farewell to thee for a few hours."

When coffee was ended, and he seated in his

cabriolet, I began to make observations on my own little world; but of house and environs I will speak later, and first say something of the master of the house himself, because you, my Maria, as yet know nothing of him.

I have your letter before me, your dear letter, which I received a few days after my marriage. Thanks, beloved, good Maria, for all its cordial words—for all its good advice, which is well preserved where it will never be forgotten; and now to your questions, which I will endeavour to answer fully; and first of all, for my husband—for my own Bear—here, then, you shall have his portrait. Of a middle size, but proportionably, not disagreeably stout and broad; a handsome, well-curled peruke, made by the Creator's own hand; large countenance, *couleur de rose*; small, clear gray eyes, with a certain penetrating glance, under large, bushy, yellow-gray eyebrows; the nose good, though somewhat thick; the mouth large, with good teeth—but brown, alas! from tobacco-smoking; large hands, but well made and well kept; large feet, the gait like a bear; but this gives no idea of his exterior, if you do not take into account an expression of open-hearted goodness and cheerfulness, which inspires a joyful confidence in the beholder. This speaks when the mouth is silent, as is most frequently the case; the forehead is serene, and the bearing of the head such as reminds one of an astronomer; the voice is a deep bass, which is not at all amiss in singing. Here, then, you have his exterior. His inward self, best Maria, I have not yet myself studied. Betrothed to him only within two months, wife since fourteen days, I have not had great opportunity to become acquainted with a man who is generally silent, and whom I have not known more than half a year. But I trust and hope all for good!

You ask whether I feel love, actual love, for him; and give, half in jest, half in earnest, extraordinary signs by which I may be able to prove this. Whether I am sensible of an insupportable want when he is absent? Whether I, like Madame L., become pale and embarrassed when he enters a company in which I am already? Whether he has any fault, any bad habit, which in another would be unpleasant to me, but which in him is agreeable? No, Maria, of all this I experience nothing; but understand, dear Maria, I can very well endure him; I must have found him excellent, otherwise I should not have married him; but love—him!

In the first place, he is much older than I am; he is nearly fifty, and I want yet three years of thirty; farther, he has been so long an old bachelor, has his good and his bad habits, and these last I do not find at all agreeable; but they shall not destroy our domestic happiness; of that I am determined. Thus, in the first place, he has a habit of spitting about everywhere, on handsome matting just the same as on bare boards—that habit he must leave off. Secondly, he smokes a great deal; to this I shall accustom myself, because I know how necessary and agreeable a pipe is to those who have made it for long the companion of their way through life; but we will have a contract between us, thus: "I am quite willing to see the lighted pipe, yet it shall only seldom be introduced into the parlour, and never into our bedroom; he may puff away as much as he likes in his own room, and in the hall, where the fumes pass away freely." Thirdly, he has an extraordinary habit of making most horrible faces, often to his own

thoughts, and often during the conversation of others; but here we will have an understanding between us—sometimes I shall say to him, "Bear, don't make such horrible faces!" But most frequently I shall leave him quietly to himself, because I know how painful it would be, how almost impossible, for him to counteract such long-accustomed working of the features; more especially as it often furnishes a mode of speech which is very expressive, and appears more merry than disagreeable. Fourthly, he has a kind of carpenter mania, and would very willingly sit of an evening and chisel and glue, and make dirty work over table, and chair, and floor; to this I will accustom myself with my whole heart, and merely every morning make all carefully clean again. It always gives me pleasure when a gentleman has some little favourite occupation, and after Bear has been occupying himself all day, till he is weary, with his medical profession, this is a cheerful diversion of mind to him. Fifthly, he has a habit of using certain coarse words; this I will patiently, and by little and little, get him to leave off; but that to which I am most fully determined, above all things, to accustom him is, to feel himself happy, and to find contentment and pleasure in his own house; for, Maria, I was poor, was obliged to get my bread in the sweat of my own brow—for teaching music is no light labour. I was not young any longer, had no beauty, nor talent beyond that little bit of music; and he, from a family of consequence, of a respectable station in life, and universally esteemed on account of his character, his knowledge, his qualifications, selected me from among many richer, handsomer, and better than I. He attended me during my severe fever with the utmost kindness, and when my mother would have recompensed his trouble with the remains of our hoarded-up money, he put it aside, and requested—my hand. Then he was kind to all who belonged to me, gave presents to my brothers, and through him prosperity entered into our formerly needy house. Should I not be grateful? should I not like him? should I not endeavour, with all my power, with my utmost ability, to make him happy? Ah, yes! that will I; with all his virtues and his defects, in jest and in earnest, in good and in evil, will I make him happy; and a voice within me says that I shall succeed.

Tuesday morning, 3d of June.

We poor mortals! What are all our good intentions, when we have not power over ourselves? The day before yesterday, I sat and boasted with myself how happy I would make my husband; yesterday—but, in order to punish myself, I will tell you all. I must turn back to the evening before yesterday, when I was so satisfied with myself.

Bear was on a visit to a sick person, and I was writing; he came back, and I put aside my writing, and, half in jest, half in earnest, the contract respecting the tobacco-smoking was made and signed. So far all was right, and so ended that day. The next day, that was yesterday, we were to dine with *Ma chère mère*. I had a little headache; and after I had arranged my cap and my hair, neither of which satisfied me, it seemed to me that I looked old and faded. I fancied my husband thought the same, a thought he made no such remark. This put me out of spirits, for I feared I should not please *Ma chère mère*, and I knew how much Lars Anders wished that I should do so. The weather, too, was disagreeable, and I had the greatest desire to stop at home;

but when I gave the slightest hint of that, he made such terrible grimaces, that I gave up all attempts of the kind. So we mounted the cabriolet, and, in drizzling rain, drove off, under an umbrella.

Ma chère mère received us friendly, but she did not seem to be in good-humour herself. There were several old ladies and gentlemen to dine, all strangers to me; it was a heavy affair; and though the dinner was magnificent, spite of all my attempts, I could eat nothing.

In the afternoon, immediately after coffee, Bear went with the gentlemen down into the billiard-room, leaving me with *Ma chère mère*, the old ladies, who kept talking to themselves, and a certain Lagman Hok, an old and tried friend of *Ma chère mère*, who sat near her and took snuff. *Ma chère mère* was silent, played patience, and looked grave. I said now and then a word, but every moment grew stiller, for my head ached sadly; the rain beat against the window, and, to tell the truth, I was out of humour with Lars Anders, who, it seemed to me, might have come, at least once, during that long afternoon, to look after his little wife, and not have gone thus indulging his old bachelor habits of playing billiards, drinking, and smoking; and in this ill-humour the afternoon wore by.

Towards evening *Ma chère mère* requested me to play something. I sat down to the piano, made a prelude, and began to sing that beautiful little thing, "Youth;" but the heat, my headache, and my chagrin together, put me quite out of voice. I sung at first tremulously, then false, and at last out of time, although I had sung that piece a hundred times before. All was still as death in the room, and I really could have cried, only that at my age one cannot be so affected. I struck a few closing notes and left the piano, with an apology, and a few words on my headache. Notwithstanding all this, *Ma chère mère* seemed really kind towards me. She seated herself by me on the sofa, gave me a great cup of strong tea, and treated me as people treat a sick child. I was now really come to the crying point; for all this, together with good Lagman Hok's politeness, overcame me. I thought how truly this was the completion of the deplorable part I had been playing the whole day, and that *Ma chère mère* would think to herself, Lars Anders has made but a bad choice; he has brought home a wife who is at the same time old and childish, sickly, and full of affection! I was downright miserable.

At last Lars Anders came, and then it was time to leave. The weather had become fine, and the tea had done me good; but the mischief had taken possession of my soul. I was out of humour with myself, with my husband, with the whole world; and, more than this, Bear sat all the time silent, and never seemed to trouble himself about my headache; for after he had just asked how I was, and I had answered "Better," he did not speak another word.

When I came home, I had something in the kitchen to see after; and when I returned to the parlour, there had Lars Anders settled himself into the sofa, and was blowing the tobacco-smoke in long wreaths before him, while he read the newspaper. He had not, indeed, chosen a suitable time for the breach of our compact. I made a remonstrance, and that truly in a lively tone, but in reality I was angry. I took, as it were, a bad pleasure in making him pay for the annoying day I had passed.

"Pardon!" exclaimed he in a cheerful voice, and still continued to sit with the pipe in his mouth. I would not allow that, for I thought the old bachelor might have indulged himself freely enough the whole afternoon.

He prayed for permission only this once to smoke in the parlour; but I would admit of no negotiation, and threatened that, if the pipe was not immediately taken away, I would go and sit for the whole evening in the hall. In the beginning, he besought me, jokingly, to grant him quiet; then he became graver, and prayed earnestly, beseechingly; prayed me, at last, "out of regard to him." I saw that he wanted to try me; saw that, truly from his heart, he wished I would yield—and I, detestable creature, would not. I remained steadfastly, although always cheerfully, by my determination, and at last took up my work in order to go out. Then Lars Anders laid down his pipe; oh, if he had been only angry and spiteful; if he only would not have laid down his pipe, but would have marched out as proud as a nabob, banged the door violently after him, and never come back again the whole evening, then there would have been some "come off" for me, some comfort, something paid for and done with; and then I could have touched over this fatal history so finely and so superficially! But he did none of all these; he laid the pipe aside, and remained sitting silently; and with that I began immediately to endure the gnawings of conscience; neither did he make any of his grimaces, but remained looking on his newspaper, with a certain grave and quiet mien that went to my very heart. I asked him to read aloud; he did so, but there was a something in his voice that I was in no condition to hear; still, in a sort of stifled bitterness against myself, I must yet tyrannize over him. I snatched the newspaper away from him—understand, this was in a joke—and said I would read it myself; he looked at me, and let me have my way. I read, in a tolerably cheerful voice, of a debate in the English House of Commons; but I could not hold out long. I burst into tears, flew to him, threw my arms round his neck, and prayed him to forgive my bad humour and my folly. Without answering, he held me close to his breast so tenderly, so forgivingly, while a tear slowly ran down his cheek. Never did I love him so much as in this moment; in this moment I felt for him real love!

I would have begun an explanation, but he would not permit it; and now it was my turn to beg of him, if he loved me, to relight his pipe, and to smoke directly at my very side. He refused; but I besought him so long and earnestly, besought it as a token of continued forgiveness, that he at last yielded. I held my face as much as possible over the smoke—it was to me the incense of reconciliation; once I was nearly coughing, but I changed this into a sigh, and said, "Ah, my own Bear, your wife would not have been so angry, if you had not forgotten her for the whole afternoon; she lost all patience while she was longing after you."

"I had not forgotten you, Fanny," said he, taking the pipe from his mouth, and looking half reproachfully on me; "but I was beside a peasant's painful deathbed in the next hamlet; this prevented me from being with you."

Ashamed to the very soul, I covered my face with my hands—I, I, who had been fostering such wicked and false mistrusts against him, and now in my vanity had been revenging myself—I, unworthy one—I, who wished to make him so

happy, what sweet refreshment had I prepared for the weary, troubled man!

The thought of my folly distresses me even at this moment; and the only thing that can give me any comfort is, the feeling that he and I love one another better since this occurrence than before.

Beloved, good Lars Anders! before I will occasion you another disagreeable moment, you may smoke every day in parlour, sleeping-room, yes, even in bed itself, if you will: only I pray God that the desire to do so may not possess you.

And now I return to your letter, and to a question which it contains, "Whether I, as a married woman, shall write as willingly and as openheartedly as I did before?" Yes, my Maria, of this be certain; I cannot do otherwise. It is now seven years since I first learned your value; and since that moment have you become to me my conscience, my better self. You were the dear mirror in which I saw myself as I was; and, though it is now two years since you removed from me far across the sea, still you remain towards me ever the same. Oh, remain ever so, Maria! otherwise I should fear to lose myself. Under your eyes, and with your help, my moral being developed itself; under your eyes, and by your counsel, will I also form myself into a good wife. It is pleasant to me, it makes my life richer, to live, as one may say, in your presence and with you, even though land and sea separate us; especially as my Bear does not belong to that class of men who are jealous of their wives' friends. He is not of the opinion that one must renounce one's friends because one has got a husband or a wife; he is not one to narrow the breast; he is too good, too rational for that. I believe he would subscribe to the words of the beloved teacher who instructed me in Christianity, "that there is a similarity between the human heart and Heaven—the more angels, the more room for them."

Ah, see! there is my Bear! Read what I have written, and subscribe, Bear.

Friday, 6th of June.

Thank God! all is right between *Ma chère mère* and me. How unlike can one day be to another! On Tuesday, so out of tune; yesterday, so cheerful.

Yesterday afternoon I proposed to my husband to go and visit *Ma chère mère*; he consented. On the way I related how foolishly I had behaved, and how willingly I would remove any unpleasant impression which I might have made. He laughed, made faces, looked very kind, and so we came to the place.

There was a great commotion and bustle in the whole house; everybody was in motion; *Ma chère mère* herself, as wing and wheel in the whole movement. She was busy preparing rooms for her two own stepsons (Bear is only half stepson) and their young wives, who are shortly expected, and who will take up their quarters there, the one for a few weeks, the other for altogether.

Ma chère mère received us in the kindest manner; Bear she provided with newspapers and Virginia tobacco, and me she bespoke to assist for the whole afternoon. I was cheerful and willing, and succeeded perfectly in pleasing her. Furniture was removed, curtains were rehung, and all went quickly and well, under her commands and with my assistance. We despatched a world of work, and were right merry over it; many were the bon mots which I made, greatly to *Ma chère mère's* amusement. She clapped me,

pinched my ears, laughed and replied merrily, and altogether afforded me a deal of pleasure.

There is something quite original and fresh in her disposition, and manners, and mode of thought, and she has, without doubt, good understanding and great natural wit. The mode of managing her household appears to me strange; it is by a union of severity and tenderness; they are at one and the same time her slaves and her children; and they, on their part, appear at once to surrender themselves, and obey her slightest hint.

One only time she and I were near coming to a misunderstanding: it was about the toilet-tables of the young wives, which I wished to have a little more luxuriously supplied; but *Ma chère mère* grew angry, excited herself over "the cursed luxury" of our times, and over the pretensions of young women; declaring that the toilet-tables should stand exactly as she had placed them, with the same covers and the same looking-glasses, as they were quite good enough. To all this I remained silent, and therefore all was soon right again; yet, after all, I am not sure whether the toilet-covers were not changed, as, soon after, *Ma chère mère* betook herself to her linen-press.

To the arrangement of the chambers succeeded several rougher pieces of house business, in which I was invited to take part: "For," said *Ma chère mère*, "it will do you good, little friend, to see how things are managed in a well-ordered household. It will be necessary for you to learn this and the other in domestic economy. 'Roasted pigeons do not fly down people's throats; and one must look if there be anything in the cellar, if one expect anything on the table.'"

I followed *Ma chère mère*, therefore, into the cellar, where, with a large piece of red chalk in her hand, she made various, and to me cabalistical, signs and strokes upon herring and salmon tubs; all which she explained to me, and then led me into every corner of these subterraneous and well-superintended vaults. After this we came above ground, where I assisted in the examination of bread-safes, delivered anathemas over rats and mice, and weighed several flour-casks. Last of all, I must be weighed myself; and, as I proved not to weigh quite five pounds (Swedish), *Ma chère mère* laughed at me in the most extraordinary manner, asserting that a woman had been burned as a witch, in the time of Charles the Eleventh, because she was under five pounds' weight. All this I endured in the most philosophic manner; but no philosophy whatever would prevent my admiration of her housekeeping and domestic arrangements. This admiration came from my heart; for, in truth, a house like this, so completely furnished and arranged, in small as well as in great, where everything has its appointed place, and stands under its own number, is worthy of observation and admiration; and no less to be admired is the housewife, who is the living memorial of all this, and who knows her affairs as well as any general knows his war-craft.

When all this rummaging about and this thorough house inspection was brought to an end, we sat down on the sofa to rest, and *Ma chère mère* addressed me in the following manner: "It is only now and then, my dear Franziska, that I make such a house-review; but it keeps everything in order, and fills the domestics with respect. Set the clock only to the right time, and it will go right of itself, and thus one need not go about ticktacking like a pendulum. Keep this in mind,

my Franziska. Many ladies affect a great deal, and make themselves very important with their bunch of keys, running forever into the kitchen and store-room: all unnecessary labour, Franziska; much better is it for a lady to govern her house with her head than with her heels; the husband likes that best; or if he do not, he is a stupid fellow, and the wife ought then, in Heaven's name, to box him on the ears with her bunch of keys! Many ladies will have their servants forever on their feet; that does no good; servants must have their liberty and rest sometimes; one 'must not muzzle the ox that treads out the corn.' Let your people be answerable for all they do; it is good for them as well as the mistress. Have a hold upon them either by the heart or by honour, and give them ungrudgingly whatever by right is theirs, for 'the labourer is worthy of his hire.' But then, three or four times a year, but not at any regular time, come down upon them like the day of judgment; turn every stone and see into every corner, storm like a thunder-tempest, and strike down here and there at the right time; it will purify the house for many weeks."

This was *Ma chère mère's* housekeeping doctrine. She next turned the conversation on my husband, and said, "Yes, you can say justly, my dear Franziska, that you are married to a man who through the whole day will be husband; but still in his own way he is very wilful, and you will have to manage him pretty much in the same way as I managed my husband. Come, we shall see how you will do! You are little, but you can bestir yourself, and I will tell you how you must conduct yourself towards your husband. You will always find him an honourable man, therefore I give you this one especial piece of advice—never have recourse to untruth with him, be it ever so small, or to help yourself out of ever so great a difficulty; for untruth leads ever into still greater difficulty, and, besides this, it drives confidence out of the house."

In reply, I told her what I had sincerely determined on these subjects; and then, contented with each other, we went into the usual sitting-room, where we found Bear sitting and gazing over his newspaper.

Mademoiselle Tuttin, who is called Adjutant Tuttin by *Ma chère mère*, set the table in order, and I, at the request of *Ma chère mère*, sang (thus she had quite forgotten my first essay), and, as I myself felt, sang very well. She laughed heartily at many merry little songs which I sang, and I saw Bear's eyes, full of delight, glancing over to us from above his newspaper. After tea, we made up, with Tuttin, *Ma chère mère's* Boston party, which was one of the most amusing I ever was at. *Ma chère mère* and Bear were particularly lively together, and made themselves very merry at my expense whenever I was stupid in the game, which being very often, produced much better effect than if I had played like a master, and we all laughed till we cried, just like children.

After supper, as we took leave, *Ma chère mère* slapped me heavily on the shoulder, kissed me, and thanked me for a cheerful day. The weather was so fine, when we came out on the steps, that we determined to walk part of the way, and to send the cabriolet before us. Our walk was very lively, and, after many mischievous pranks, I had the luck to see Bear arrive at the bottom of a ditch. I cannot help laughing when I think of it; he looked so like a real bear, lying there on four feet (between us two, I am not quite sure

whether he did not allow himself to be rolled over). The good Bear!

But I will not always be talking to you about Bear and his Beareass. You must have some knowledge of the house and family. It will be somewhat difficult on this last subject to be quite lucid; but endeavour, good Maria, to understand what I will endeavour to make clear.

General Mansfield married, for his first wife, a widow lady named Werner, with two sons, the eldest of whom was my husband; the second, Adolf, who has been dead some years. By this wife the General had two sons, who yet live, Jean Jacques and Peter Mansfield. The mother of these two died while they were yet children. A year afterward the General married a rich and proud Miss Barbara B——, our present *Ma chère mère*. Lars Anders, who was then thirteen years old, was but little satisfied to receive a stepmother twenty years of age. She, however, conducted herself most exemplarily, and made an excellent though stern stepmother for the four boys, from whom she won both reverence and love, notwithstanding a certain rigour and economy which she practised towards them. There was, however, reason for the practice of this latter virtue; for the general, who was himself a man of lavish expenditure, had brought his affairs into great disorder, and his wife only succeeded in preserving her own property by her deed of settlement. From her own income she provided the cost of the four stepson's education, in which she spared nothing.

The boys were made to observe the most punctilious respect in the paternal house; they were taught a certain precise politeness, and a French style of manner. Every morning, at a stated hour, they presented themselves before their parents, kissed their hands, and said, "*Bon jour, Mon cher père! Bon jour, Ma chère mère!*" and every evening, in the same manner, at the appointed time, came the hand-kiss and the "*Bon soir, Mon cher père! Bon soir, Ma chère mère!*" (thus arose the appellation, *Ma chère mère*, which the sons always apply to her). This kissing of the hand still remains, whenever the sons and mother meet, although the French greeting is discontinued. For the rest, the stern stepmother allowed to her sons a deal of time and freedom for games and bodily exercises, and the enjoyment of the fresh air, for she thought to strengthen at the same time both body and mind by these means, and they had in the whole a happy youth.

General Mansfield was a handsome man and a brave soldier, but at the same time extravagant, domineering, and wilful. He inquired but little after his children, and lavished away his property. *Ma chère mère's* marriage with him was not happy, and, when he died, he left his sons nothing. Since his death, her behaviour to them has, without any ostentation, been the most generous; for, without making any difference between the sons and stepsons of her husband, she bound herself to allow each one of them, as soon as they came of age, a certain annual sum, while she herself held the stewardship of her large but debt-burdened estate. My husband, who had chosen his own path in life, and who, by his own ability and industry, had won for himself an honourable position in society, declined this allowance as soon as he was able, because it was his wish to be dependant on no one, and least of all on *Ma chère mère*, whose despotic will did not always square with his independent feelings. This, together with some weighty disclosures which

various opportunities have brought about, has occasioned them to be towards each other on an independent and very good understanding; while the other sons, more or less, are obliged to accommodate their wills to hers. Lars Anders and she stand, as it were, in fear of each other, but have at the same time the highest mutual esteem; yet she declares that she will never see him beside her as physician. She sends all medicines and all doctors whatever to the hangman; will have nothing to do with any of them; and supports her opinion by the proverb, that "nobody can be a good physician till he has filled a churchyard."

Since I have undertaken to write the history of *Ma chère mère*, I will also sketch her portrait. See, then, a tall lady, of a large but handsome growth, whose figure in youth must have possessed both symmetry and strength; very straight, somewhat stiff, and with the mien and bearing of a general. The countenance would be handsome, were not the features so strongly marked and the complexion so gray; the chin, also, is somewhat too large and projecting. Round the mouth, which is furnished with large, white teeth, a very friendly, pleasant smile often plays; but when the sentiment is less friendly, the under lip closes over the upper, and gives a character of such stern determination as is not pleasing in a woman. But *Ma chère mère* is a peculiar person. Her hair is quite gray, and streams sometimes, but not in curls, forth from the helmet; which head-dress thrones itself solitarily on the stern, high, often cloudy forehead. No ornament nor jewel appears upon her attire; but, instead, the greatest cleanliness is attended to, and a something strikingly accordant and appropriate. *Ma chère mère* never is tight-laced. (In parenthesis let it be remarked, that I should not wonder if lacing up tight may not have something to do with our often being less agreeable in company; the soul never can move freely when the body is in fetters.) Her dress, generally, is of brown or gray silk; in the morning the yet handsome neck is covered by a white handkerchief, which towards noon is exchanged for a standing collar. The hands are well made, though large, and though not always used, as we must confess, in the most pacific work. *Ma chère mère* has a rough voice, speaks loud and distinctly, makes use sometimes of extraordinary words, and has a vast many proverbs at her tongue's end. She walks with great strides, often in boots, and swings her arms about; still, whenever it is her will to do so, she can assume a style of the highest and most perfect breeding. People accuse her of being avaricious; of mixing herself in the affairs of others, and with disregard of consequences; many, indeed, are the histories which are related of her; nevertheless, every one throughout the whole country has the highest respect for her, and her word is worth as much as a king's; for the universal opinion respecting her is that she is prudent, a person to be relied upon, and a steadfast friend. This appears to me beautiful in her. She reminds me of *Götz von Berlichingen*; and it sometimes appears to me as if deep and tender feelings were hidden under this stern exterior, and then I feel as if I might love her.

Hitherto she has been the steward of her own estate, and has managed her affairs admirably; now, however, she wishes that Jean Jacques should take part with her. This son has studied agriculture abroad, has lately married, and will

now come and settle down at Carlsfors. Lars Anders shakes his head over this partnership—*Ma chère mère* and Jean Jacques!

It is impossible to speak fully of *Ma chère mère* without mentioning her maid Elsa. These two have lived together forty years, and appear as if it were impossible for the one to live without the other. Elsa is towards her mistress at once a slave and a tyrant. She is so avaricious that she almost begrudges her mistress the wear of her own clothes, and grumbles over every clean pocket-handkerchief she gives her. But in fidelity, order, and cleanliness, she has not her equal; and on this account her mistress regards her with a certain respect, and yields, in many a little strife between them, the mastery to her. When there is occasion, Elsa will work for her mistress night and day; *Ma chère mère* is her fate; *Ma chère mère* is her sphere of action; *Ma chère mère's* word her law; *Ma chère mère's* person her proper self; without her lady, Elsa is nothing. Once she received permission to visit her family, and to be away eight days; but Elsa was back with her mistress before two days were over, because, as she said, she could not hold out so long from her. It is said, that the same evening, on account of some negligence or other, she received a box on the ear from her mistress; she bore it in silence, and never after this trial left her again. Elsa is dry and stiff, and her form is all angles; people say that she knows more of *Ma chère mère* than any other mortal; be that as it may, Elsa is silent as a mummy, and deserves to be embalmed.

Tuttin, shadow of a shade, step forth! Elsa is a Rembrandt-like shadow; Tuttin, one of those indeterminate ones which, without character itself, cannot take a determinate form from another. The beauty of Elsa is her strong fidelity; Tuttin says continually, "The Generalin says so and so," "The Generalin thinks so and so," "The Generalin commands so and so," yet in secret she calumniate her, and obeys her without devotion. Humble sometimes to self-abasement, she is ready at other times to exalt herself above the crowd; but then the strong arm of *Ma chère mère* puts on the restraining rein, and compels her at the same time to unfold her peculiar ability; to step forward, that is, with all her excellent talents of housewifery.

After one glass of her excellent ale, I am ready to exclaim, "Long life to Tuttin!" How Tuttin will contrive to live in that world where there will be neither baking nor brewing, where no more ale will foam, and no more bread will rise—how she will be able to collect together ideas there, are questions which I cannot answer. But a truce to Tuttin and the wandering of the soul, I will not go rambling such a long way from home.

I must now give you a description of my own home, of my own little Rosenvik. Rosenvik belongs to the estate of Carlsfors, and lies a good half mile from W., where my husband is the principal and most beloved physician. He rents this little place from *Ma chère mère*, because he, as well as I, is so fond of the country. It is to us a source of pleasure rather than profit, although I have my own speculations about the garden, out of which I think something may be made, though as yet it is no more than a wilderness. The garden, a birch-grove, and a meadow in which three cows and a horse have their living, are the whole demesne of Rosenvik. Why it has this name of Rosenvik or Rose-creek, I cannot imagine, as, although it lies on a creek of the Helga Lake, no rosebushes are to be found near

it; nothing but a quantity of hyssop and elder. This we may preserve, and not throw the other away; but I hope that Rosenvik may yet do honour to its name; and in the mean time, that the beautiful may not supplant the useful, I shall plant currants, peas, and beans, in plenty. On the whole, I rejoice to find myself in a place where there is yet something to do, and where all is not ready and complete. My disposition and my temperament require much employment, and I know how dear that is for which one has worked. The house is small, but comfortably furnished; we have four rooms and a kitchen on the ground-floor. Lars Anders has had them all very prettily furnished; especially the company-parlour, with its blue-chints covered furniture and white muslin curtains, is a sweetly pretty room. In the second story are two handsome guest-chambers. The kitchen and storeroom were, I must acknowledge, but indifferently supplied, but that is a need, thank God! soon remedied.

In respect to money, my husband has made a regulation which, at the same time that it gives me pleasure, has occasioned me some little uneasiness. He puts all his money into a strong box, to which he has had two keys made; the one he keeps and I the other, with full permission to take out as much money as I will, and when I will, without rendering any account to him. This proof of his perfect confidence in my prudence delights me, and at the same time this, his confidence in me, is a far stronger bond than any avarice on his part could be. I always fear to take out too much, and not to economize as I ought; constantly avoiding to indulge my heart, or even my thoughts, in any little extraordinary expenditure, because I myself brought not a penny into that coffer; all that I find there belongs to him, and is the wages of his labour. It seems to me as if I should be more free, and that it would be better, if he would allow me monthly a stated sum. One day I made this proposal to him, confessing all my scruples to him with tears in my eyes, but he would not hear a word of it. "Are we not one?" said he, "and I have seen already that you are a skilful manager." With respect to the scruples, he assured me that I should lose them as we came to know each other better, for that then I should find that there would be no *mine* and *thine* between us two. I am greatly disposed to believe in the good man's prophecy, but yet I intend, not only for the peace of my own conscience, but for the sake of good order, to keep an exact account of all my expenditures.

I am greatly pleased with the little maiden that Lars Anders has provided for me, and who is to be my own maid. She is a young peasant girl, with such a happy, innocent, pretty appearance, as does one good even to see. She is quiet and industrious, has understanding and a good heart, so that it will be a pleasure to me to instruct her. If God give me children, Sissa shall take care of them. I will model her into a real *Bonne* for them, so that I may be easy on their account when they are not in my own arms. The recollection of my own childhood tells me how important first impressions are; therefore purity, goodness, and good sense, shall watch over the cradle of my child, shall even then begin to establish themselves in the soul; and one does not soon become indifferent to the friends of one's childhood. I am speaking all this time of modelling my maid to her duties; but believe me, my Ma-

ria, that I will not forget also to model myself. Now is it that the flame is so soon extinguished on the altar of love? Because the married pair forget to supply materials for the fire. One must unfold, and cultivate, and perfect one's self, in one's progress through life, and then life will become an unfolding of love and happiness.

My first employment will be to arrange my house, so that contentment and peace may dwell in it. I will endeavour to be a wise lawgiver in my small, but not mean world; and do you know what law I mean first of all to promulgate and enforce with the most rigorous exactness? A law for the treatment of animals, thus:

All domestic animals shall be kept with the utmost care, and treated in a friendly and kind manner. They shall live happily, and shall be killed in that mode which will make death least painful to them.

No animal shall be tortured in the kitchen; no fish shall be cleaned while alive, or be put alive into the kettle; no bird shall, while half dead, be hung up on a nail; a stroke with a knife shall, as soon as possible, give them death, and free them from their torture.

These, and several other commands, shall be contained in my laws. How unnecessarily cruelty is perpetrated every day, because people never think of what they do! and how uncalled for, how unworthy, is cruelty towards animals! Is it not enough that, in the present arrangement of things, they are sentenced during their lives to be subject to us, and after their deaths to serve us for food, without our imbittering yet more this heavy lot? We are compelled, in many cases, to act hostilely towards them, but there is no reason why we need become cruel enemies. How unspeakably less would they not suffer, if, in all those circumstances in which they resemble mankind, in the weakness of their age, in the suffering of their sickness, and in death, we acted humanely towards them!

There were laws in the old world which made mildness towards animals the holiest duty of man, while the violation of such laws was severely punished; and we, Maria, we, who acknowledge a religion of love, shall we act worse towards the animal creation than the heathen did? Did not He, who established the kingdom of love on the earth, say, that not a sparrow fell to the ground without the knowledge of our Father which is in heaven? Observe, Maria, he said not that the sparrow should not fall, but that it should not fall without being seen by the Universal Father. Yes, all the unnecessary suffering, which the intemperance, the folly, the cruelty of man occasion to animals, is also seen; and heard, too, is the lamentable cry and the complaint which the same causes; and, on the other side the grave, may not its annoyance add yet one more pang to hell, and trouble even the peace of the spirits in heaven?

Oh, Maria! let not women and house wives be deserving of this punishment; let us, when we come before the judgment-seat of the Universal Father, be pure from all unthankfulness, and abuse of any creature which he has made; and let us deserve, in that better world, to see around us an ennobled race of animals, to live with them in a loving relationship, even as we had already begun to do on earth!

Here comes my husband! who announces to me that we must soon go and pay visits to the neighbours; we have many of them, and I am to understand that there are people among them

who are longing after my acquaintance—very good, sensible people, so he assures me.

Hold yourself, therefore, in readiness to make new acquaintance; brothers-in-law and sisters-in-law, also, I shall soon have to introduce to you. I am glad to think of their arrival; especially will it delight me to become acquainted with my husband's best-beloved brother, Peter Mansfield, who is a very amiable man, and a distinguished lawyer. In a month, we also expect a guest at Rosenvik; and with all these, together with Lars Anders, I am anticipating a very cheerful and happy life.

I could find pleasure in writing a romance on all this; romances commonly end with a marriage, but does not the proper romance of human life here have its beginning? Seen in the whole, the life of every man is a romance—a little episode out of the great romance of the "Book of Life," which is written by that great original author, "The World."

Suppose, therefore, Maria, that I should write you a little romance. Let it, my good, affectionate reader, hold a place in your heart; whether it be cheerful or sad, this I know, that you will not cast it from you.

Farewell! think kindly on your romantic and devoted

FRANZISKA.

CHAPTER II.

Rosenvik, June 9th.

YESTERDAY morning, which was cool and clear, I seated myself in the cabriolet by the side of Bear, who, as usual at eight o'clock, drove to the city. He left me at Carlsofs, promising to call for me on his return, in case he did not forget it—forget it! horrible Bear!—and so proceeded he with these words as a passport.

As I advanced up the long, beautiful walk which leads to the principal front, I saw a tall, extraordinary figure standing in the court, apparelled in a long gray cloak and green helmet, and waving something about, which did not seem much unlike a witch's staff, and exclaiming, "Drive on! do you hear? drive on with the heaven-chariot!"

I glanced involuntarily towards heaven, filled with the idea of the fiery chariot of the Prophet Elijah; but the idea quickly vanished, as, the moment afterward, I recognised in the figure before me the person of *Ma chère mère*, whom, as I came near, I found to be scolding her groom, because the oats were already exhausted, and accompanying her moral discourse by the powerful brandishing of her whip—but only in the air.

The moment she became aware of my presence, her countenance changed! she seized my hand cordially, and, pressing it, said, in a friendly voice, "Nay, see! good-day, my dear Franziska; you come just in the right moment. I have put on my Januarius to-day," said she, pointing to her cloak, "because it seemed to me rather cold. My grays will be here immediately with the heaven-chariot, and then we will have a drive together;" and at these words four horses brought into the court an extraordinary vehicle, whose roof rested on four tall pillars—this was the heaven-chariot.

Ma chère mère ordered me to mount, and then climbed up afterward and seized the reins, while a servant took his seat behind. The horses for some time were refractory, on which *Ma chère*

mere stood up and applied the whip to such purpose that they became perfectly obedient. She laughed to see how pale I was, drove much slower, and began to talk cheerfully, desiring me to tell her all about my housekeeping affairs at Rosenvik. As soon as I was convinced that she was a most excellent driver, I became calm and cheerful also, and gave myself up to the pleasure which I involuntarily feel when I am with her.

We saw many labourers, hedgers, and ditchers, and such like people, at their work; she spoke with many of them, praised some, scolded others; and one thing I could not fail to observe, how good the understanding seemed to be between her and her dependants; how perfectly they seemed to know her, and how proverb after proverb mutually passed between them.

During our drive we nearly overturned Lagman Hök, who came on in a *disobligeante*, and whose coachman was so startled by the appearance of the heaven-chariot that he turned from right to left, and exactly in the direction which we took.

"The hangman! how you drive, Lagman!" exclaimed *Ma chère mère* in a thundering voice, while her powerful arm held back the horses, and by a quick turn prevented any misfortune.

Presently the heaven-chariot and the *disobligeante* stood side by side; and again in good-humour, she said laughingly and jestingly to Lagman Hök, who looked out from his green curtains in consternation, "Dear Lagman, you have so infected your coachman with your poetical fancies that he has confounded the rule of the road."

Lagman Hök and poetical fancies! That is quite impossible, thought I.

"When a chariot of heaven approaches," replied the Lagman, more poetically than I expected, "who can think about the statutes of earthly roads?"

So jested the two together for a while, and then the heaven-chariot and the *disobligeante* went on their respective ways.

On our return home, *Ma chère mère* was in the liveliest humour, and we fell into a very animated conversation on men, and women, and honour. Her doctrine for women was, indeed, no doctrine for coquettes; it might be summed up thus: "Act so that your husband and all men may esteem you; thus you will enjoy peace in your own house, and honour in your life." Esteem and reputation she considers as the most valuable possessions of this world.

"The rules for the behaviour of young women towards men," said she, "may be in general somewhat too rigid. They remind me of an old song which I heard in my childhood, and of which I still remember these words:

'Comes a fine young man to offer thee his arm,
So make thy bow and answer,
"No, thank you most kindly, I go well alone!"
And comes a fine young man to ask thee to dance,
So make thy bow and answer,
"No, thank you most kindly, I dance well alone!"'

I took up the words of the old song with her, at which she laughed heartily, but remarked gravely, "That song is really not so very foolish after all, little friend. I will not exactly say as much as it; but this I will say, that to dance or walk with another man besides your husband may have its doubtful side. A young woman—lay my words to heart—cannot be too circumspect in her conduct. She must take heed of herself,

my dear Franziska, take heed of herself. I grant you, that this; our age, is more moral than that of my youth, when King Gustave the Third, of blessed memory, introduced French manners and French fashions into our country; and I believe now that there are much fewer atheists and *Asmodeuses* in the world. But, as I said before, you must take heed to yourself, Franziska, for the tempter may come to you, just as well as to many another one; not because you are handsome—for you are not handsome, and you are very short—but your April countenance has its own little charm, and then you sing very prettily; as one may say, you have your own little attractions. And some day or other, a young cockcomb will come and figure away before you; now mind my advice, keep him at a distance, keep him at a distance, by your own proper behaviour. But if this should not suffice for him—should he still make advances, and speak fulsome, seductive words, then you must look at him with a countenance of the highest possible astonishment, and say, 'Sir, you are under a great mistake; I am not such a one as you suppose!' Should this not answer the purpose, but he still continue to make advances, then go you directly to your husband, and say, 'My friend, so and so has occurred, and so and so have I acted; now you must act just as you think proper!' Then, my dear Franziska, depend upon it, the *Corydon* will soon discover that the 'clock has struck,' and, no little ashamed, he will go about his own business; while you will have no shame, but, on the contrary, honour from the affair; and, beyond this, will find that 'a good conscience makes a happy conscience,' and that 'a conscience light gives rest by night.'"

Ma chère mère's good counsel seemed to me indescribably entertaining; but, unfortunately, as she had invited two old and poor maiden ladies, who are partly supported by her bounty, to dinner, they entered while we were in the midst of our discourse, one of them in a dress trimmed with two rows of lace. The countenance of *Ma chère mère* darkened the moment she saw this; and scarcely had the unlucky maiden made her salutations and seated herself, when she began a sharp tirade against the two lace trimmings.

"One row," said she, "would have been a superfluity, but two are unpardonable!"

The poor lady endured the severe reprimand, and then began an excuse, by saying that the upper row was put on merely to hide a join.

"I must tell you what, my dear friend," exclaimed the Generalin, "when people are not above accepting alms, they ought not to be above showing a join! Yes, yes, this I must tell you, poverty is no disgrace: 'it is not every one who is born with a silver spoon in his mouth;' but vanity in poverty—that is, the devil in boots! Now, now, do not weep on this account; 'reproaches are not millstones.' Take off both rows of lace, and it shall be my care that you possess a dress in which no join shall be an eyesore."

The poor old maiden seemed consoled at once, and again *Ma chère mère* was in good-humour.

The next moment, hearing the cabriolet drive up, I rose to take my leave.

"Yes, so," said *Ma chère mère*, cordially, "go now, my dear Franziska. I know very well that it would not be advisable to invite you and your husband just now to stay to dinner. Nay, away with you, in Heaven's name, only come again soon; because you see, my child, you cannot come too often. See, indeed! see, indeed!"

will she, say, "I never like people standing so long to take leave. Adieu! adieu!"

I got away as soon as I could, and ran off laughing; and now I say to you, adieu, adieu, also, and will bid good-day to my husband, only wishing I could keep him a few days with me.

10th June.

Here I am again sitting with a pen in my hand, impelled by a desire for writing, yet with nothing particular to write about. Everything in the house and in the whole household arrangement is in order. Little patties are baking in the kitchen; the weather is oppressively hot; and every leaf and bird seem as if deprived of motion. The hens lie outside in the sand before the window; the cock stands solitarily on one leg, and looks upon his harem with the countenance of a sleepy sultan; Bear sits in his room writing letters; I hear him yawn, that infects me; oh! oh! I must go and have a little quarrel with him, on purpose to awaken us both.

I want at this moment a quire of writing paper, on which to drop sugar cakes. He is terribly miserly of his writing paper, and on that very account I must have some now.

Later.

All is done! A complete quarrel, and how completely lively are we after it! You, Maria, must hear all, that you may thus see how it goes on among married people.

I went to my husband, and said, quite meekly, "My angel Bear, you must be so very good as to give me a quire of your writing paper to drop sugar cakes upon."

He. (*In consternation.*) A quire of writing paper?

SHE. Yes, my dear friend, of your very best writing paper.

He. Finest writing paper? Are you mad?

SHE. Certainly not; but I believe you are a little out of your senses.

He. You covetous sea-cat, leave off raging among my papers! You shall not have my paper!

SHE. Miserly beast! I shall and will have the paper.

He. "I shall!" Listen a moment. Let's see now how you will accomplish your will.—And the rough Bear held both my small hands fast in his great paws.

SHE. You ugly Bear! you are worse than any of those that walk on four legs. Let me loose! let me loose! else I shall bite you.—And, as he would not let me loose, I bit him; yes Maria, I bit him really on the hand; at which he only laughed scornfully, and said,

"Yes, yes, my little wife, that is always the way of those who are froward without the power to do. Take the paper! now take it!"

SHE. Ah! let me loose! let me loose!

He. Ask me prettily.

SHE. Dear Bear!

He. Acknowledge your fault.

SHE. I do.

He. Pray for forgiveness.

SHE. Ah, forgiveness!

He. Promise amendment.

SHE. Oh, yes, amendment!

He. Nay, I'll pardon you. But now, no sour faces, dear wife, but throw your arms round my neck and kiss me.

I gave him a little box on the ear, stole a quire of paper, and ran off with loud exultation. Bear followed into the kitchen, growling horribly; but then I turned round upon him armed with two delicious little patties which I aimed at his

mouth, and there they vanished. Bear, all at once, was quite still, the paper was forgotten, and reconciliation concluded.

There is, Maria, no better way of stopping the mouths of these lords of the creation than by putting into them something good to eat.

This afternoon we shall begin our visits to our neighbours. I shall dress myself very nicely; shall wear a little straw bonnet with flowers; and mark only with what satisfaction Bear will present "My wife! my wife!" It is with a peculiar and a delightful tone that he says, "My wife!" but at this moment "My wife" dare not stop any longer talking; she must await her husband at the dinner table.

Evening.

Again a little strife! It's dangerous to wake the slumbering lion. The scene is over our dessert.

He. My dear friend, which bonnet do you think of wearing this afternoon?

SHE. My little straw bonnet with flowers.

He. That? Oh no; wear the white crape bonnet, it is so pretty.

SHE. That? My only state-and-festival bonnet! What can make you think of that, my angel? to sit in the cabriolet in it, and it perhaps rain.

He. Then it would not get dusty.

SHE. How witty you are! but then the rain would not improve my bonnet.

He. My dear Fanny, you would give me great pleasure if you wore that bonnet.

SHE. Then, dearest Bear, I will wear it, even though it rained and were dusty at the same time.

And thus I now go to put on the white bonnet. What would Madame Folger say, if she saw me driving on a country road in it? Our little gardener youth serves on this extraordinary occasion as footman, in a gray jacket with green velvet collar.

Friday, 11th.

"But really," exclaimed Bear, as he saw his wife yesterday in her visiting dress, "you look so lovely in that bonnet! Positively *Ma chère mère* must see you in it; we will just call and speak a word at Carlsfors before we go farther. It is really so pretty!"

"Do you think so? Well, just as you like, my love, if it will not make us too late at other places."

"Ah, that must take its chance: *Ma chère mère* must see my little wife to-day."

See now, therefore, the little wife in the little bonnet, sitting in the little cabriolet, sending uneasy and beseeching glances up towards heaven, which seemed glooming over the little bonnet. In the mean time we reached Carlsfors without a drop of rain, and found visitors there already before us. *Ma chère mère* met us in the most joyful and friendly manner; kissed me, examined me from head to foot, patted me on the cheek, and said I looked like a little rose.

"You have a little wife, Lars Anders," said she; "but one can say of her 'little and—good.'"

He looked delighted; for me, I must confess that it vexes me that *Ma chère mère* thinks me so extremely little—one might fancy that she did not consider me a complete human being; yet I am such.

Presently after our arrival, other visitors also made their appearance, and I sat myself down to observe the company. My eyes soon riveted themselves on a very small lady, easily less than I, who was still young, and whose whole being

exhibited an extraordinary sprightliness. She was of dark complexion, had lively brown eyes, a somewhat large and aquiline nose, and somewhat projecting chin. She was not handsome, yet there was a piquancy about her; and her dress, which was fashionable and elegant, accorded extremely well with her sprightly little figure.

My husband and she shook hands in the most friendly manner, and her quick eyes were immediately directed to me. He made a movement to introduce us to each other, but just at that moment *Ma chère mère* came up, turned me round and led me to the piano, insisting that I should play and sing something to the company. When I had fulfilled this duty, the lively little lady came and seated herself near me, looked penetratingly at me, yet in the manner of a friendly, old acquaintance, and asked how long I had been in this place, and whether I did not find the people of this place "horribly behind-hand in comparison with those of Stockholm."

When I had answered her, she said, looking at me with a steady, searching glance, "You are very like your mother! I often used to see her; a superior woman; I knew her very well, Madame Werner, although I have not seen you before."

I looked at her inquiringly, and the question was on my lips, "With whom have I the honour," &c.; but she was beforehand with me, and asked whether I had already seen many of my neighbours. I answered, that at that very time we were on our way to make visits.

"Indeed!" said she; "but you will become acquainted with a variety of curious personages! Some of a water-porridge, some of a horse-radish kind! it would be a pity if you had not a preparatory knowledge. When you come, for instance, to the Von P.s, the new nobility at Holma, you must talk of fashion and the fine arts, and be heedful to mention, *en passant*, your genteel acquaintance—that is, if you wish to stand well with the Von P.s. Have you ever had the experience of feeling, after you have been for a few hours with some people, as if you were drenched through with water, or had all the new wine of life pressed out of you, as one may say?"

"Oh, yes," I replied, laughing.

"Just observe, then, how you feel when you come from the Von P.s," said she. "But don't you talk of art with Major Stalmark, of Adamsruhe, that is, if you care to stand well. Nature, freedom, simplicity, are the watchwords there. My good friend, the major's lady, will talk of nothing but servants and housewifery; with the major, it is all sound reason and vigorous strength. I shall be rather anxious to know whether you really find yourself refreshed thereby, for there are tribunals of strength which are not, after all, strengthening. But take heed that the young Adamites do not play you some unparadisaal prank or other; I fancy the old ones keep them in the stable."

"And, as a good friend," continued she, "I counsel you farther not to pass by the old maiden Hellevi Hausgiebel, who has her bird's nest not far from the city, or she would take it amiss. With her angular figure and her keen tongue, she will remind you, at one and the same time, of a woodpecker and of nœrbread; but perhaps you already know her?"

"No," replied I, "but I have heard there is something about her both laughable and malicious."

"Laughable! malicious!" repeated my auditor, hesitatingly, "hem—God knows if that be not saying rather too much! Malicious! she speaks out her opinion of people tolerably freely, but she does that openly, and not to the disparagement of any one. Ridiculous! why, yes, that may be true—she has her infirmities, as much, and perhaps even more than others. But this likeness you will certainly find, after all, very striking."

"I should like to know," said I, amused by her observations, which sounded much less malicious when spoken than they do on paper, "I should like to know what you would say of me and my husband, and to what you would compare us."

"Who," said she, "can look on the good Doctor Werner without thinking of plum-pudding? and you, my sweet lady, are a hot sweet sauce thereto, without which it would not be half so savoury. But what I would add farther regarding your future acquaintance is, that you will never know what is really venerable till you have seen the old Dahls; and you can gain no clear idea of amiability before you have seen their niece Serena, the flower of the valley, as she is called in a double sense."

"Serena!" repeated I; "that is a remarkable name."

"You will not think so when you have seen her," replied she; "it seems as if the Almighty himself had baptized her. But now I must leave you, and go farther; and if, after this conversation, you should say that I am either mad or ill-natured, I shall not mind it. I can tolerate you in any case, and I hope to see you soon again."

With this she pressed my hand most warmly, stood up, and took a hasty leave of all. As she left the room, I perceived that she was slightly crooked, and that she took no care to conceal it.

"Who is she? who is she?" I asked, the moment she had left the room.

"What, Franziska!" said *Ma chère mère*, "don't you know Miss Hellevi Hausgiebel? How stupid of me not to introduce you to each other!"

I stood as if a thunderbolt had struck me. "Miss Hellevi Hausgiebel!" exclaimed I at last; "but Miss Hausgiebel is old!"

"That is her own history," returned *Ma chère mère*; "she has her own peculiar oddities, and is at as much trouble to make out that she is old as other people that they are young. I, for my part, do not go much to her bird's nest, because I understand nothing about all the snails, and worms, and sponges that she has collected there, but she herself is a witty and estimable person that I can tolerate very well."

"But what ever will she think of me!" thought I, embarrassed by my want of circumspection, as I went back with Lars Anders to the cabriolet. My bonnet had made no great figure—and what stupidity I had been guilty of! The beginning of our journey was not brilliant, certainly.

"Bah!" said I, comforting myself, "Miss Hausgiebel is a reasonable person. I have not, after all, been so very stupid, and we can soon set all right again." La Bruyere says truly, "*Le mal ne se retire jamais du ridicule. C'est un caractère; l'on y entre quelquefois avec de l'esprit mais l'on en sort.*" And so the cabriolet rolled on merrily towards Adamsruhe, the abode of Major Stalmark.

On the borders of the estate we met a young girl of perhaps fourteen years old, riding, with-

out saddle, on an Oeland horse; her hair was of a reddish colour, and, together with her dress, was in a state of the greatest disorder.

"Good-day! Miss Malla!" exclaimed my husband to the young Amazon: "are your father and mother at home?"

"Yes," answered she, "and I'm riding Pette to pasture."

"Now, God forbid! can that be a young lady?" exclaimed I, as she rode on, and we drove forward.

"Yes," replied my husband, laconically.

As soon as we arrived at the house, a prodigious commotion was occasioned. Three young men in hunting-dresses were lounging about with at least a score of dogs at their heels, and no sooner had we made our appearance than the whole barking company assailed our innocent equipage, and were only silenced by the young men, much to the advantage of my heroism.

This place must be called Adamsruhe, thought I to myself. As I went through the entrance-hall, something coming between my feet had nearly thrown me down; it was a piece of wood; and looking round, I soon perceived two sly, young, grinning figures in one corner, who were preparing to bombard anew the peaceable guests. I threatened them with the peace of wood, and was conscious of a great inclination to make the wild young things nearer acquainted with it. But Bear, who was already within the Tambour, called me, and I followed in great haste, that I might escape a something, God knows what! which came with a great rustling close to my heels. I was angry, and yet compelled to laugh. Bear was quite enraged when he heard what I encountered, and so we waited till we had composed ourselves; he till he had grumbled himself quiet, and I till I had satisfied myself with laughing; and then, entering the room, which was handsome, we encountered two persons whose appearance indicated the possession of a certain rank and wealth. These were the major and his lady; he an elderly, though still good-looking man, of excellent gentlemanly demeanour; she, very stout, neither young nor handsome, but with a something open and honest in her exterior.

Lars Anders presented "My wife," and "My wife" was received as cordially as Lars Anders himself.

The gentlemen walked up and down the room and gossiped together, and the ladies seated themselves side by side on the sofa, to make nearer acquaintance. The lady looked at me and I at her; her countenance seemed to me familiar, and still more her voice; the latter, which had a Finnish accent, seemed to make an especial impression upon me. I could not take my eyes from her; then I saw a little scar upon her neck, which at once brought back a little episode in my far-passed life. I must take a review of this, in order that you may understand what follows.

In the first place, then, you must accompany me to my hero-deeds in the Gymnastic Hall; accompany me to that time when I was yet very young, when the blood did not flow so quietly as now in my veins, although Bear asserts that without mischief it might flow yet more quietly—to a time in which I became heartily weary of seeing always the same sun and the same faces before me; when I must have adventures, let it cost what it would; when a sedition or a conflagration were a recreation; when the battle of Prague and the battle of Fleury were my favour-

ite pieces of music; when I wept that I was not a man, that I might go to the war; and when once, in a sort of necessity to enjoy an excess, I drank at one time five cups of weak tea, and the lady of the house, in a kind of phrensy of benevolence, would yet afflict me with the sixth.

I was then sixteen years old; and, fortunately for my restless spirit, about this period my right shoulder began to grow out. Gymnastics were at that time the fashion, as a cure for every description of physical ailment, and my parents determined, therefore, that I must gymnastize. Dressed, therefore, in ornamental pantaloons and a coat of green cloth, and on my head a net-lace cap, trimmed with pink ribands, I went one day into a great hall full of ropes, ladders, and poles, in which between twenty and thirty girls, dressed in a costume similar to my own, were assembled. It was a singular and wonderful scene. For the first day I remained quiet, learning merely from a teacher the bending of the back and the motion of the hands and feet; on the second day I struck up a warm friendship with some of the girls; on the third, emulated them on ropes and poles; and, before the end of the second week, entered the second class, and began to invite them on to all kinds of undertakings.

I was reading at that time the Grecian history, and even in the Gymnastic Hall Grecian heroes and their deeds floated around me. I suggested to my class, therefore, that we should all assume masculine and antique names, and that from this time we should only be known in this place by such names as Agamemnon, Spaminondas, Pelopidas, &c. For myself I chose the name of Orestes, and gave that of Pylades to my best friend. There was one tall, thin girl, with a broad, Finnish accent, who, on account of the bold independence of my ideas and behaviour, was always opposed to me, whom it pleased to make merry over our change of names, and who, laughing, called me and my friend Orre and Pyle, because we were both small. This annoyed me extremely, especially as it damped the Grecian spirit which I had infused through the whole troop.

My tall enemy declared that she would be called by no other name than her proper name of Brita Kaisa, yet, for all that, I persisted in giving her the name of Darius.

Although I was very enthusiastic for Grecian history, I was no less a partisan for that of Sweden. Charles the Twelfth was my idol, and many a time have I entertained my friends with the relation of his actions, never failing to kindle up in myself the most burning enthusiasm. One day, however, Darius came over us like a shower of cold water, opposing me with the assertion that Czar Peter was a greater man than Charles the Twelfth. I received the challenge with blind zeal and quiet rage, and then my enemy, with great coolness and a good deal of knowledge, brought forward a multitude of facts in support of her assertion. I endeavoured to tread these all under foot, and still to exalt my hero to heaven; but had, alas! those unfortunate words, Pultawa and Bender, forever thrown in my way!

O Pultawa, Pultawa! Many tears have flowed over the bloody field, yet none more bitter than those which I shed in secret, as I, like Charles himself, received there an overthrow! Those tears were full of agony, which I now cannot comprehend. I really hated my enemy, hated her as much as Czar Peter himself, as much as I hated that people whose lord he had been!

One spark only was needed to make the flame break forth, and that spark came. There was a young, pretty, lame girl, whose masculine dress failed to make her less bashful and feminine than at first; my chivalric spirit was excited on her behalf, and I declared myself her knight. One day, as I was just about to declaim a verse of Racine's, the detestable Darius suddenly started up beside me, and said, jeeringly, "I am thy rival!" I threw an annihilating glance on my rival, and said, scornfully, "Keep to your needle, Brita Kaisa!"

This provoked her; she reddened, and my party broke out into a roar of laughter. The next moment, as I sat upon the upper steps of a ladder, looking down on the swarming crowd below, I felt myself suddenly seized by the foot by a strong hand. It was my tall enemy, who, stretching forth her arm, held me fast, while she exclaimed, in scorn, "Halloo, above there! help yourself now like an Orestes, or remain sitting grinning there like an Orre!"*

What Orestes really would have done in my situation, I know not; but my anger, my cries, and my grimaces, probably, were much more like those of a bird caught in a springe than of a captive hero, for an indescribable laughter rang all round, and excited me to perfect phrensy. I called with a loud voice upon Pylades, bidding him to fly to my rescue; but Pylades looked very much like a poltroon, and addressed only a few remonstrances to my enemy, which were without effect.

"I call you out! I demand satisfaction!" screamed I to Darius below, who only laughed, and said, "Bravo, Orre! bravo! So Czar Peter held the great Charles the Twelfth fast at Bender, exactly thus!"

I was just about to do some desperate deed, when one of the teachers entered, freed me, and put an end to this scene. I was, however, full of fuming bitterness, and, going up to Pylades, said, "You have behaved like a poor sinner, Pylades! Follow me this moment; I will go and challenge this great braggadocio who has affronted me. You shall be my second."

Pylades looked like a terrified hare, yet did not dare to say no.

I sought out Darius, who, with an assumed air of indifference, stood leaning against a wall, humming a tune to herself, and, stepping up, said, with contracted eyebrows, "What meant you just now?"

"What did I mean?" returned she, measuring me with a proud glance; "why, exactly what I said!"

"Then I have a word to say to you," answered I, grimly. "You have affronted me in an unworthy manner, and I demand, that in the presence of the whole assembly you beg my pardon, and declare Charles the Twelfth to be a greater man than Czar Peter; otherwise you must fight with me, if there be honour in you, and you be no coward!"

"Ask pardon?" returned Brita Kaisa, reddening, yet with detestable coolness. "No, that does not become me! Fight? Well, yes! but where, and with what? with needles, or—"

"With swords!" returned I, with real pride, "if you are not a coward—and here! We can come half an hour before the others; the weapons I will bring with me; Pylades is my second, choose one for yourself!"

"I shall not trouble myself about that," replied Brita Kaisa, with intolerable insolence; "I myself am enough for you two!"

"But you shall have a second!" exclaimed I, stamping with my small foot: "that is the rule!" "Well, then, Grönwall, come here," said Brita Kaisa.

Elizabeth Grönwall was another tall girl, clumsy and stupid, with a hanging lip, and called by me, jestingly, Nestor. She came, and listened to the relation of what was to take place, and then, with an important air, declared herself ready to be second to my enemy.

"To-morrow morning, at nine o'clock," said I, turning away.

"At nine o'clock!" repeated Brita Kaisa, with a laugh of scorn.

I busied myself on our homeward way to instil courage into Pylades, and to silence her tongue, both by good words and threats. Pylades, who really loved me, promised, after many remonstrances, to remain true to me to the death.

My blood was boiling; yet I must confess that, after I was in bed, and all was still around me, a certain astonishment and a little shudder came over me, on account of the deed I was about to perform. But to recant; to leave Charles the Twelfth in the lurch, and my own honour unavenged; to deserve the scorn and continued persecution of my enemy; no, far better die than do that! But then I thought on the words of the Commandments; on my parents—how they would weep if I died; my enemy, too, stood before me strong and sound as Czar Peter; and I, ah! I knew too well, was no Charles the Twelfth. As I thought on the tears of my parents, I began to weep, and in weeping dropped asleep.

Next morning, when I woke, it was clear day, and the clock struck half past eight. I had nearly slept over the time, and, while I rubbed the sleep out of my eyes, it was to me as if somebody had blown into my ears, with a trumpet, the words, "at nine o'clock!" I started up; the combat stood distinct before my memory, and in five minutes I was dressed. I seized two small swords, of which, the evening before, I had possessed myself from the room of my absent brother; when, at that moment, it suddenly occurred to me that I must write a few lines for my parents, in case I was killed in the combat. Accordingly, I wrote with pencil on a piece of paper:

"BELOVED PARENTS—When these lines meet your eyes; despair! already the clock strikes a quarter to nine; I should be too late if I delayed longer. I hastily threw the letter I had begun into my drawer, myself, like Cæsar, into the arms of Fortune, and took my way, with the two swords under my cloak, to the Gymnasium.

You may easily imagine that I possessed no knowledge of the art of fighting; but that did not trouble me much. To make a straightforward attack seemed to me as easy as simple, and that was the mode I meant to adopt. For the rest, I remember that, on my way to the scene of combat, I thought as little as possible. When I came into the great hall, I found my enemy and her second arrived there before me. Pylades was nowhere to be seen, and in secret I could not help cursing him. Darius and I greeted each other proudly, and scarcely perceptibly, as I handed to him the swords, that he might make his choice. He selected one, which he handled as easily and skilfully as if he had been accustomed to such toys all the days of his life; at sight of which, I felt myself already bored through.

* Orre, in Swedish, signifies a cock of the wood.

Presently came Pylades, pale and full of anxiety; I cast an enraged glance on him, and closed the door.

You will probably have observed, best Maria, that I call and speak of the same person as *he* and *she*, but this confusion is not without design; it characterizes not only the whole scene, but the confusion which governed my brain.

"In Heaven's name, do not kill one another," exclaimed the poor Pylades. "It's all madness!" "Silence!" screamed I, in anger, and, turning to Darius, said, "Do you still persevere in maintaining your error, and refusing to ask my pardon?"

"I persevere!" replied Darius, with unexampled composure, trying at the same time the temper of his weapon by bending it against the floor: "Czar Peter was the greater man!"

"Death to him! long life to Charles the Twelfth!" cried I, drawing at once, and setting myself in a position. Darius did the same.

"Wait! wait!" cried Pylades, full of anxiety, "wait, I must give the signal!"

"Give it, then, quickly," said I.

"Wait! wait! I have thought of something," stammered out poor little Pylades, "wait!"

"I will not wait!" cried I. "Russian friend," said I, addressing Darius, "I count three, and then we strike! One! two! three!"

Our swords struck; and the same moment I was disarmed, and lay overthrown on the ground; Darius stood over me, and I believed my last moment was come. But how astonished was I, as my enemy threw away her sword, and, taking me by the hand, lifted me up, saying, at the same time, cheerfully, "Now that you have had satisfaction, let us be good friends; you are a brave little being!"

Pylades lay on her knees, nearly fallen into a swoon; Nestor sat upon a ladder, and cried with all her might. "I knew not what to think, and stared at my late enemy, on whose neck a wound was bleeding freely: "You bleed!" I exclaimed; "I have killed you!"

"Ah, bah! it's only a little scratch that will soon be well," said she; "for the rest, I must tell you that I like the Russians just as little as you do; I said so, only—" she turned pale, staggered, and required a seat.

"What have I done! unfortunate that I am!" cried I in agony, almost out of my senses, and threw myself on the ground before her. "Forgive, oh, forgive me!"

At that moment a terrible alarm sounded at the door; Pylades slipped aside and opened it, when in rushed the fencing master and three teachers, and the next moment I lost all consciousness.

It was not till some weeks afterward that I learned we had been betrayed by Pylades, who had written to one of the teachers, praying her to prevent my foolish intentions. The letter, however, came too late for that purpose, and thus the affair was over as they entered.

Brita Kaisa—for from this time I christened nobody with new names—recovered from her wound in a short time, while I lay dangerously ill above a quarter of a year. This sickness, however, was beneficial to me, for it calmed my impetuous temperament.

On my recovery, I learned that Brita Kaisa had removed with her parents to their own dwelling in Finland; that she had visited me frequently in my illness, and had expressed her regret that they must leave Sweden before I had recovered, so that we could be fully reconciled

with each other. I also was grieved not to have said one kindly word to her at starting. But, however, my violent sickness had weakened old impressions; and then followed a variety of sorrowful causes, such as death, adversity, the having to earn my own bread, and much more that influenced my disposition beneficially, at the same time that they were hard to bear. Thus I forgot the absent one—of whom enough has been said—and now to the present.

Twelve years were passed since then; I had quite forgotten the countenance of my former enemy. I had forgotten my early bravery; I was become a grown woman, and knew how to appreciate Czar Peter, and even to wish well to the Russians. I had become the good wife of Lars Anders Werner, and now went out with him in the cabriolet to make visits, as well-behaved and quiet as any Mistress Prudentia whatever!

Well, now, Maria! the major's lady, on whose sofa I now sat, the stout gentlewoman, with the open, pleasant countenance that struck me at once as so familiar, yet unfamiliar, who was she but my former thin enemy of the Gymnastic Hall, Darius, Czar Peter, in one word, Brita Kaisa! Her voice, and the scar on her neck, made me at once perfectly recognise her. I cannot tell you how much I was excited. I felt embarrassed, affected, but still more filled with merriment, which prompted me to break into exclamations and laughter. The spirit of joke and mischief got the mastery of me, and, taking up a knitting-needle which lay before me on the table, I put myself in a martial attitude before her, and exclaimed, "Long live Charles the Twelfth! We strike! One! two! three!"

The lady looked at me a moment, as if she thought I must be gone mad, and then exclaimed herself the next moment, "Czar Peter was the greater man!" seized another needle, and opposed herself to me. On this, we dropped the needles at once, and laughing, embraced each other.

You cannot conceive the amazement which this scene occasioned to Lars Anders and the major; but of all the questionings, the explanations, the astonishment, and the laughter that succeeded, you may easily imagine.

Brita Kaisa and I contemplated each other anew. "The thousand!" exclaimed she, "how old you are become since then!"

"And you not more amiable," thought I; but I said, "You, on the contrary, are in appearance much younger," which was true; the fair fat lady was much handsomer than the dark thin girl.

After we were satisfied with narrating, wondering, and laughing, we came to speak of the pleasures and follies of childhood in general. The gentlemen grew very lively over the histories of their wickedness and their adventures, and Brita Kaisa declared that she had never been so happy as in the days of her childhood. All appeared unanimous in considering this time as the golden age.

"Yes, yes!" said my husband at last, with a sigh; "it is a good time, that never returns to us."

"Dearest," said I, somewhat troubled by this childhood enthusiasm, "don't imagine that it was so immeasurably good. Is not childhood, to grown persons, like the landscape scene in perspective? It looks so beautiful, only because it is seen from afar. I am convinced that, as a child, you had many weary hours, with lessons, reproofs, penances, confinement, and many other such things, which cannot affect you now."

Lars Anders laughed.

"I, for my part," continued I, "will never praise the days of childhood; to me this time was filled with lamentations that I was not grown up. Ah, how charming it would be to be grown up, and not be scolded for tearing my dress! Ah, only to be grown up, and drink coffee every day! Ah, how fortunate to be grown up, and go to the ball, like mamma, in a gauze dress, and with flowers! Ah, that I were but grown up, and might read romances! I am convinced that all children, each in its own way, have these regrets. But grant, for a moment, that sometimes children may really be happy, what, after all, is this happiness? A happiness fleeting, and but half understood, which we, therefore, can only half enjoy. And when we at length reach the goal of our childhood's desires—when we are grown up, drink coffee, read romances, and go to balls—alas! then that *ah!* has taken root in the heart itself, and we have then so much unrest, that we may be able to enjoy the true rest. And here have we that much bepraised happiness of childhood and youth!"

"Really, there is much truth in what madame Werner has said," remarked the major, gravely. "That was cursedly well said, that about the perspective. Yes, yes, it is true."

"And so your early youth was not happy, Franziska?" said Lars Anders, looking at me as if half surprised and half grieved.

"No, in truth it was not," returned I; "I was much too unquiet and unreasonable for it to be happy; and without quiet and without reason there can be no true happiness."

"Very good, very good," said the major.

Tea was brought in, and the young gentlemen came in at the same time—three brisk, lively young men, only too courted, the stepsons of Brita Kaisa. They talked of hunting, and of dogs and horses, from which subject the conversation naturally turned to the new neighbour at Ramm. They said that he was an American; "And," added one of the young men, "very rich, and that his history was as strange as that of any hero of romance."

"Yes, certainly!" said the stepmamma, shrugging her shoulders, "I am convinced that he is very much like other people; but, dear Robert, you always exaggerate so."

Robert blushed, as if he had said something extremely improper, when in rushed the young Adamite swarm, just like so many gadflies, threw themselves down to the tea-table, and endeavoured to possess themselves of all that was eatable. The mamma endeavoured to obtain quiet by a lecture on good behaviour; but the little monsters troubled themselves not on this account, nor would be still fill their demands were satisfied. I wished, with all my heart, that Lars Anders could have seen this, but he was occupied with the gentlemen in another room.

"One must not subject children too much," said the mamma; "one must leave them their freedom; for by this means they grow up natural, and not, like so many, artificial and affected. Have you seen the Miss Von P.s?" asked she. "Heavens! how ridiculous it is to see them sitting in their white gloves, with their screwed-up months, thinking themselves so grand and genteel."

At this moment the door was pushed open, and a figure stepped in which no one could accuse of affectation, for her hair, her dress, her carriage, all seemed to be made of wind.

"Come here, Mally," said the major's lady, and introduced me to this her stepdaughter, who, making a courtesy, much after the fashion of a bear, turned herself round to the tea-table, as her brothers and sisters had done, when all three immediately began to quarrel, and some such amiable words as the following were audible: "Fy! aren't you ashamed of yourself?" "Can't you let my biscuit alone, you pig, you ugly, ill-mannered thing; I'll tell mother of you!"

But the mother did not trouble herself about them. The gentlemen came in; and while the Adamites ate and quarrelled, and we on that account might hope to get out of the house with life and uninjured limbs, we took our leave—Brita Kaisa and I shaking each other most kindly by the hand, and exchanging mutual good and neighbourly wishes. I determined, however, in my own mind, not soon again to put myself in bodily danger from timber missives, nor even again to be complimented on my former good looks. The major, too, accompanied me to the cabriolet, and appeared to be greatly pleased with me. For myself, I, too, must confess that the visit, on the whole, had afforded me pleasure; still, I left the house with two little thorns in my heart. The first of these was, that Lars Anders had declared himself to have been so wonderfully happy in childhood, and had sighed over the remembrance, as if the present were as heavy as lead. Secondly, I feared I had talked too much and with too much warmth in a place where I then was only for the first time. I feared my husband might not be pleased with me, and might feel disposed to set "very bad, very bad," against the "very good, very good," of the major. I would have given my life just to have known what he thought about it, but the good man sat beside me stock still, and noticed nothing but his fingers.

I must know, thought I to myself, and began puzzling my brain how I should introduce the subject, when, just as I was about to open my lips, he said, "I am sorry, indeed, Fanny, that you had not a happy childhood!"

"But it makes me a great deal more sorry," said I, just ready to cry, "that you were so terribly happy in your youth that you can never be so happy again, and that all after-pleasure must be heavy in comparison. You had more pleasure in your ball than you can have now in your wife."

"You little fool!" said he, looking at me with such an expression of astonishment as at once appeased me, "you really cannot think so—you cannot think me so mad! yes, truly, that time was good, but this is far better!"

"Thank God!" said I, softly, and deeply grateful.

"And then," continued he, "I think the childhood of but few is as happy as mine was. When I think how the whole world seemed to smile on me then; what I felt, when I lay, looking upward towards heaven, in the grass, and heard the rustling around me in the wood; when I think how, later in life, I went wandering through those woods about Ramm; how everything around me seemed life and pleasure—then, Fanny, I may well wish that you had experienced as happy a childhood and youth as I have done."

"But life, like the year," replied I, "has sometimes an after-summer, and I feel that mine has begun."

Lars Anders took my hand in his, and pressed it; not a word was said, but we were happy.

and the cabriolet rolled rapidly along the level road homeward.

"What a desolate region this is!" exclaimed I, after a while, and surprised by scenery I was not familiar with; "it is unlike our valley—where are we?—for here are only hill and wood."

"We are in the neighbourhood of Ramm," replied he. "I have purposely taken this road, that you may see the place where my youth was passed. Independently of this, too, both the house and park are worth seeing. I am glad that nobody is living here now; it is always painful to see a place desolate where people are living, and where life might be enjoyed."

"But who could properly enjoy life here," I asked, "where all is so black and dreary? That long alley is black as a church-vault! and there, at the end, is that the house? Ha! it looks like an old castle haunted by ghosts!"

"And yet," he replied, "here has been great happiness—great joy; and," added he, "great sorrow, also!"

"What! has some misfortune happened here?" asked I.

"Yes," he replied, "a misfortune—but how is the place overgrown!"

"Like a scar over a closed wound," said I.

"True!" replied he, "true, thank God! It is a long time since I was here; and now I hardly know it again; and that house, how dark it has become!"

"I assure you," said I, "it is haunted; I saw a little gray man peeping through a window."

"Perhaps the new resident is already come," remarked he.

"If he be not more cheerful than this place—" the cabriolet stopped, and we alighted. I looked up with a certain feeling of reverence and anxiety to the stately old house, which, with its tall, two-storied *façade* and black tower, and its adjoining dark wings, bore a resemblance to a swooping owl. Tall oaks grew around it, and many of the lesser children of the wood; service-trees, poplars, and palm-willows thronged round the walls and looked in at the windows, like people crowding to gaze upon a royal table. To the left, silvery water gleamed out between the trees—the Helga Sea, the water beside which Rosenvik lies so pleasantly.

In the middle of the court, which was now completely overgrown with weeds, an invalided Neptune, standing amid moss-covered water, told that, in earlier days, there had once been a stately fountain there. Everything looked desolate and unhappy; yet there was, as we soon perceived, a movement in the house, though not of ghosts. The great door stood open, and presently, a workman coming out, we learned from him that the place was about being immediately prepared for the new resident, who was shortly expected here.

We entered; and I could not help being surprised by the size of the rooms and the view from the other side of the building, and was almost ready, with a certain lady, to exclaim, "Ah! how gloriously beautiful is it here! here trees, and there woovers!" I rejoiced myself in the free, wide landscape, extending over woody heights and surrounding meadows. To the left lies the Helga Sea; nay, indeed, it flows up to the very walls, which are built upon a low rocky point, garlanded, as it were, with alder-bushes, while the water, breaking in little waves on the beach, makes delicious music.

In one of the handsomest rooms I was greatly

surprised to find a magnificent organ, which has lately been set up there.

"Mr. Romilly is very fond of music," said the overseer of the work, who, with great politeness, had gone through the rooms with us.

"Of what country is he?" asked my husband.

"He is a Portuguese," was the reply. "He was attached to Don Miguel's party; inherited afterward the property of an uncle in the West Indies, and will now come and enjoy this great wealth in our country, because it is the quietest and most secure in the world."

"That is good luck," thought I; "we shall next have Don Miguel himself for our neighbour in Ramm!"

I could not resist trying the organ, which was of a magnificent, although somewhat too strong a tone for my taste; yet, at the same time, it enchanted me; and I know not how long I should have sat before it, had not Lars Anders reminded me that it was already evening.

"Now the only agreeable things in this house," said I, "are the organ and the prospect towards Rosenvik. I would not live here for all the wealth in this world; still, on an autumn evening, I would gladly come here by moonlight, if you would only come with me, Bear, and wander about to see whether it be not here, as in old castles of which I have read; whether there be not moving walls, ghost-like shadows, blood stains which can never be effaced, balls of thread which roll after one's heels, and at last transform themselves into bloody daggers—" here I suddenly paused, for my husband sighed, and, glancing at him, I saw that his usually friendly, good-natured countenance had become so dark that I shuddered, and turned round involuntarily, to see whether a ball of thread were not following us; but, thank God! I saw nothing; and then, with secret haste, followed him out of the house, and, the moment we descended the steps, a flight of jackdaws from the tower flew over our heads into the wood.

"And here it was so joyful, so beautiful!" sighed Lars Anders; "it was a home for youth, for joy, and love!"

"But how is it so different now?" asked I; "and why did *Ma chère mère* leave a dwelling which is far finer than Carlisfors, and which had once, you say, far more lively guests than jackdaws?"

"Because—because," hesitated he, "she experienced a great sorrow here. Do not speak to her of Ramm, Fanny; do not tell her that you have been here; another time I will tell you why. This large, beautiful wood, which is nearly a Swedish mile in circumference, is, or, rather, was, a park; now the paths are grown up; but we will often come and look about here."

"It is very gloomy here," said I; yet while I was even speaking these very words, a ray burst forth from the descending sun, and threw a golden glory upon the dark gray house and on the summit of the wood. I do not know how it was, but at that moment the name Serena came into my mind, as if it had been the literal signification of this sunbeam; the sunbeam, however, soon died away in the advancing twilight.

"Thus—yes, exactly thus!" said Lars Anders, with a melancholy smile, as he observed, with a tear in his eye, the illumined and again darkened house.

We mounted the cabriolet in silence, and silently drove towards home. As we came into more cheerful scenes, I seemed to breathe more

freely, and as it seemed to me, at length, that our thoughts had dwelt quite long enough on the old crow's nest, I raised my voice, and asked, "Bear, where does Serena live?"

A smile came over his face, like sunshine in the wood, and he said, "Yes, she is lovely!"

"Tha. I believe," said I; "but where does she live?"

"She lives in the city, and is the handsomest and best girl in the whole place," said he.

"But, Bear," remonstrated I, "you have never spoken to me about her."

"I prefer leaving people and things," said he, "to speak for themselves: you shall soon see her; for one of these days we will go and pay a visit to the old Dahls."

I was intending to ask still farther questions, when a great rain-drop hit me upon the nose; then a second, and then a third, till it was a perfect shower. We sought for the umbrella, but it had been forgotten, and now handkerchiefs and shawls were in requisition to cover my bonnet—but, ah! in vain; my gauze state-and-festival bonnet was entirely ruined before we reached home! Shape, freshness, colour, and flowers, all were wet through and spoiled forever. But the only discontented face which this misfortune occasioned was Bear's.

And so ended the first visiting-day.

THE SECOND VISITING-DAY.

What does the bird of passage do? He goes restlessly wandering about the world, seeking for himself a place where he may build for himself a home to dwell in, since he finds no rest; and who, indeed, does, till he has found a home, a little world for himself, in which, after his own desires, he may live in rest and freedom? And when he has found a spot, or a tree, in which he will abide, then carries he together leaves, and wool, and straw, and builds for himself a home; there he can rest, sit up aloft in his nest, look out on the world below, and sing; and so till the next time of his wandering.

And now, after this little preface, I shall conduct you to the bird's nest of Miss Hellevi Hausgiebel. As I ascended the steps to the door, I must confess that my heart was not as light as a feather, for the words "malicious and ridiculous" lay heavy on my conscience; but, from the topmost step, down flew Miss Hausgiebel to meet me, embraced me with smiles; and I, on my part, heartily returned her embrace, thinking with myself "Miss Hausgiebel is a sensible person;" in which opinion I was only the more decided the more I looked about her bird's nest.

The little house was a perfect little museum. Excellent copperplate engravings, and paintings by good masters, ornamented the walls; beautiful busts, in bronze and plaster of Paris, were tastefully arranged about. One was delighted to find one room a library; and in another was a collection of shells, minerals, and many curious natural productions, arranged under glass; all in good preservation and well disposed. Wherever, in short, we cast our eyes, indications of mind and sentiment were seen; while the lively little Hausgiebel herself, leading us here and there, and explaining all to us, was not the least interesting part of the collection.

"But, really, it is quite charming here," exclaimed I, quite happy and refreshed by what I had seen: "no one can experience *ennui* here!"

"Your words afford me a great pleasure, dear Madame Werner," replied Miss Hausgiebel, in

a lively voice, "for it is my highest wish to draw away this wearisome enemy, *ennui*, with all its attendant yawnings and vapours. All that I have collected together in two years is merely to prevent my friends, and more especially myself, experiencing *ennui*; and my daily occupation and my pleasure are, continually, to bring into my nest some new straw or other, or to rearrange the old. You see this engraving," said she, pointing to a St. John after Domenichino, "and this head of Venus, in plaster of Paris. I received them yesterday, and to-day they make me quite happy. I am not rich enough to purchase original masterpieces, but I can possess myself of copies; and thus, at small cost, collect around me the ideas of great artists."

"But these masterpieces are all original," said I, as we entered the little cabinet of natural history.

"Yes," answered Miss Hausgiebel, "and on this account they are the most valuable that I possess. The Great Artist, God, acts here, as with all, *en grand seigneur*. He has scattered his inimitable works of art over land and shore, in wilderness, and in the depths of the sea itself; the earth is full of them; and mankind has nothing to do but to go out and collect."

These remarks were to me quite unexpected. "Oh, Miss Hausgiebel," said I, "you are right! how much richer might we not make our lives, if we would gather of the good that is around us; if we all, each day, brought home a straw, as you call it! but too often we go about, like the blind, seeing nothing."

"Ah, that is the misfortune!" said she; "could not the doctors operate upon this kind of catastrophe?"

"That of itself would do no good," said my husband: "it requires another sort of operation."

"Oh Lord! what do you mean, Dr. Werner?" asked she.

"That one finds in many people a sleepiness, a heaviness of disposition which—"

"I hate all heaviness," interrupted Miss Hausgiebel, with a spring like that of a frightened bird: "it sends lead into my heart only to hear the word spoken. I have rigorously striven to fly from it, and, in my terror, have taken refuge in my bird's nest; but even here, alas! I must acknowledge that there is a law in the world, which may be called the heavy law, and which draws our bodies down to the earth; yet I strive to keep my soul free, and to collect subjects of thought around, as a bird may fly about the world, and drink dew from the flowers of Eden. Were I a Corinne or a De Staël, I should, perhaps, possess enough in myself, I should then sit down in my little home, a lyre in my hand, and, like the nightingale, enchant my friends with the tones of my voice alone. But, as I am only Hellevi Hausgiebel, moderately gifted, both in body and soul, and yet do all that in me lies to make it agreeable to those around me, I have called these children of art and nature to my assistance; and, if my visitors experience *ennui*, I can only assert that it must be their own fault."

The lively lady said all this as she led us down into her garden, into flowery vine and sweetly smelling peach-houses; and then showed us many beautiful and rare plants, which she herself cultivated, and called her children. The Bird's Nest consists merely of a house and garden; but the garden is large, well fenced, and richly furnished with trees and flowers.

We partook of a collation in a pretty little pavilion in the garden; and, while we were thus

occupied, other visitors from the city made their appearance, among whom was Lagman Høk, who was received by Miss Hausgiebel with peculiar cordiality. The conversation was general, but soon turned itself upon the new neighbour at Ramm, about whom the most various reports and conjectures were given. By turns he belonged to all nations, and his journey here was ascribed to the most various causes: the most generally accepted of which was, that he was a spy; but what he had come to spy, nobody could tell.

"Now, I'll bet anything," said Miss Hausgiebel, after many guesses had been made about him, "that our ill-renowned neighbour, after all, will turn out quite a simple, and nothing but a worthy man, who, tired of his own country, is come here into Sweden to divert himself with shooting hares and roebucks. I have lived ten years at Bird's Nest, and have never seen either a spy, a renegade, or the hero of a romance. I fancy these races are all extinct in the world. On the contrary, I have seen many people who are weary of themselves, and who want to get rid of the burden of life. God grant that this race may become extinct also! I have not, however, any objection that this new neighbour should be a man of the first class—nay, I wish it; it would make the whole country lively, and might, perhaps, somehow occasion an interesting romance."

The conversation was continued long on this subject, and was kept up with great spirit.

Miss Hausgiebel belongs to that rare class of people who not only can keep up a lively conversation themselves, but seem to decoy good things out of others. I was quite surprised to hear how witty Lars Anders was; he and Miss Hausgiebel jested, one against the other, and bantered one another, like good old friends. She followed us to the garden-door, as we came away, and, I fancy, read in my eyes that I wished to make some apology for the remark I had so inadvertently made when we first met; for she took my hand, and said, in the most cordial manner, "Come often to Bird's Nest, my good Madame Werner; I care nothing, after all, if people do say that old Miss Hellevi is malicious and ridiculous. I myself have heard the report, but it will not occasion her one more gray hair than she has already. She will not appear so, however, to Madame Werner, and she is bold enough to beg you to come again; and Dr. Werner, I hope, will accompany his wife. But, remember this, I do not compel you—I hate compulsion in social life; and, dear Madame Werner, if you should ever say to the doctor, 'Ah, good husband, we really must pay a visit to that old Miss Hellevi Hausgiebel! She is a wearisome person, but still she pressed us so!' then I pray you, in Heaven's name, not to come; and even, indeed, if you were never to come again, Miss Hellevi would say, all the same, 'The Werners are good-hearted people, and it would give me great pleasure to see them often.'"

"But," said I, "the Werners are not so liberal; they reckon confidently on seeing you soon at Rosenvik, and will take it ill if you do not come."

"Is it possible? then I will be among the first to come!" said the lively little lady, and, kissing our hands, flew away. Flew away, I say, because she resembles a bird in so remarkable a manner; all her motions are quick—too quick to be graceful.

As the cabriolet bore us slowly away, in the

peaceful, beautiful summer evening, I endeavoured to discover clearly what was the impression which the Bird's Nest and its possessor had made upon me. I had experienced pleasure; Miss Hausgiebel pleased me, in the first instance, because she had so kindly forgiven my stupidity; secondly, on account of her dwelling, and her philosophy of life; but still I was not completely satisfied. One but after another raised itself in my mind against her Bird's Nest; then another but raised itself against this objection; and so, at last, to disentangle myself from this but-warfare, I determined to draw Lars Anders into it.

"Bird's Nest," I began, "is very neat, pretty, and interesting; but—"

"But what?" questioned he.

"But I miss a something," said I, "in this little museum, when I think of it as a home. It seems to me as if there were something dry, something egotistical, in the whole establishment."

"How so?" asked Lars Anders, attentively.

"How shall I say?" deliberated I. "It seems to me as if the love of the shells had dried up the heart. Whom does Miss Hausgiebel make happy by her establishment and her life? Who is benefited by them?"

"My dear Fanny," replied my husband, "we must take care not to judge too severely, and not to take that word *benefit* too one-sidedly. It is true that Miss Hausgiebel leads a pleasant life for herself, but she imparts pleasure also to her friends. There would exist less moral information and less pleasure in this neighbourhood if Miss Hausgiebel and her Bird's Nest were not here. Her Wednesday *soirées* are as lively as they are interesting. We will often go to them."

"Now, yes, Bear," said I, "it is very well that she amuses the people; it is very well that somebody will give themselves the trouble; but still, I think that her house would be more attractive if it could offer—how shall I express it!—a more lively human interest."

"It is not without such a one," returned he, "even though it be concealed. Miss Hausgiebel has a young sister, who made an unhappy marriage, and, in consequence, became extremely unfortunate. When she was a widow, and had lost all her property, her sister Hellevi was not only her excellent friend, but took her to live with her, and became the support of her and her daughter. This poor lady, an estimable mother, has become averse to society through her misfortunes. If you had gone to the upper story of the house you would have seen still-life there, not less interesting than Miss Hellevi and her museum; human beings cannot love one another better than these two sisters do."

"If there be such an egg in the Bird's Nest," said I, "I am perfectly satisfied; for you see, my own Bear, that without a loving human heart, I can consider no dwelling happy, even were it full of works of art and jewels. But long life to Miss Hellevi Hausgiebel and the Bird's Nest!"

THE THIRD VISITING-DAY.

A meager day in a rich house. The house would be magnificent, but it is only decked out. The master would be grand seigneur, but boasts of his chandeliers and French carpets. The lady would be of the highest taste, and would conduct the most interesting conversation—of which, however, she makes only an extraordinary mish-mash. The daughters would be highly accom-

plished, full of talent and style, and have a sort of jargon, from which only proceeds a great emptiness. The son would be a person of great importance, and is only a little blonde gentleman with burned hair. The whole family is a collection of unfortunate pretensions.

A great inheritance, a patent of nobility (N.B.—Mr. Von P. says that he has merely reassumed his German nobility in Sweden), and a journey to Paris, have, according to their opinion, exalted the family of the Von P.s very high in the world. For the last two years they have been settled at Britaberg; have spent the summer there, and built a splendid house, and would now pass for eagles among small birds; after all which they must see, with great astonishment, *Ma chère mère* look down upon them.

Notwithstanding all this, Mrs. Von P. is a very polite lady; but a certain flourish of condescending friendliness towards me took away all charm from her politeness. Several young gentlemen, who were calling at the same time, chatted and laughed a great deal with the young ladies, Amelie and Adele, who, in the most elegant morning-dresses, with finest gloves on their hands, sat moving their heads as if they were fixed on steel wire.

Mr. Von P. questioned me immediately after Generalin Mansfield, examined me as to my relationship with her. I had never thought of this before, and it made me sorry to discover it. Then we began to speak of Stockholm, and of all well-known people there, when, behold! all Mrs. Von P.'s acquaintance and intimate friends were counts and countesses. She seemed to think, as an especial matter of course, that I must have heard of Count Von L.'s family. Count Von L. and his family had lately been at Britaberg, and now the Von P.s were invited to pass part of the summer with the Count Von L., at H. The Von P.s had made an excursion with the Von L.s, the former summer, to Uddewalla, and had resided at Gustavusberg together; the Countess Von L. was an extraordinary clever person, whom Mrs. Von P. liked as a sister; and the Miss Von L.s were pretty and accomplished girls, *tout a fait, comme il faut*. Madame Werner, of course, knew the Von L.s?

No, Madame Werner must confess her ignorance.

"At Count Von L.'s," said Mrs. Von P., "we met the best society in Stockholm. I there met the Baron N.'s family; perhaps you are acquainted with them?"

"No."

"Not? They are of the highest standing," said the lady. "But I cannot help thinking that I must have met you, Madame Werner, in evening parties at Count B.'s."

"It is not possible," I replied, "for I never was there."

"But," persisted she, "it seems to me that, positively—Pardon, but might I inquire Madame Werner's family name?"

"Buren."

"Bure, Buren," said she, "an old noble family, I believe."

"I don't know; I believe—" said I, hesitating and blushing, for I knew that my family was not noble; but a little miserable weakness had come over me.

"Yes, yes," continued Mrs. Von P., in a consolatory manner, "it is certainly a noble name, but, in our restless times, everything gets so easily confounded. Our family, for instance,

which is descended from an old German stock, and has given its name to princes, and counts of the empire—our family, I can tell you, even had forgotten its rank, and lived anonymously in Sweden, until Count L. said to my husband, 'It will not do any longer, my good friend; you, with your great property and your deserts, must have a seat and voice in the House of Nobles.' Much more of the same kind, too, the count said, which induced us to assert our old claims to nobility. The affair is, to be sure, in itself but a mere trifle, especially in our times, for whoever anticipates the age a little sees easily that education now is the aristocracy, and art as good as a patent of nobility. We live in an enlightened age, my best Madame Werner," continued she, "and my friend, the Countess L., always said, 'Education gives a positive rank.' Now it is true, one may be always glad, and thank God, not to have been called Backström or Wallquist, Löfgren, Sjögren, or such like; a good name, like real property, is always a picture of good fortune. When people are placed by fate in a high station, they can so much more easily choose their acquaintance, and get into certain circles. Amelie, Count L.'s sister, the Countess W., once said—do you know the Countess W., Madame Werner?"

"No—yes—a little," replied I.

"Is she not a most charming person? Amelie said to herself, '*Ma sœur vaut mieux que moi!*' It delights me, Madame Werner, that you know so distinguished a lady. Ah, tell me yet some more of your acquaintances in Stockholm; perhaps it may happen that they are mine also."

I acknowledge to you my weakness, Maria. I sought about in my brain after counts and countesses. I believe Mrs. Von P. had infected me with her passion for the high-born. I mentioned, therefore, at last, the Baroness R.

Mrs. Von P. looked contemptuously. "Don't know her," said she; "probably *retirée du monde*. At Count L.'s, and at our own house, the very best society only assembled; *corps diplomatique* was at home with us and Count Von L.'s."

At this moment I suddenly became aware that Lars Anders was glancing at me with the most roguish grimaces: this, and the unfortunate attempt I had made with the Baroness R., drove the rage for distinction quite out of me; and in order to make myself at once quite independent and clear, I named the family of his Excellency D., as my acquaintance in Stockholm.

"Ah, indeed!" said Mrs. Von P., starting a little, "I, too, have been there—a few times."

"Oh, I was there twice, three times a week," said I, smiling.

"Indeed! oh, most distinguished house," remarked she; "perhaps the countess is an intimate friend of Madame Werner?"

"No, I saw her but seldom," I replied. "I gave music lessons to her daughters."

"Ah, indeed, yes! on account of the acquaintance, I suppose," said she.

"No," I replied, boldly, "for money. I was poor, and I maintained myself thus."

Mrs. Von P. grew red, and looked quite embarrassed; but Lars Anders smiled, and that gave me courage. "My brother-in-law, Bergwall," said I, "and my friend, Madame Wallquist, obtained for me through Demoiselle R., the governess in his excellency's house, the situation of music-teacher to the daughters of his excellency's family."

"Yes, indeed! yes, indeed! yes, indeed!" visi-

bly quite out of conceit; and then, wishing to give the conversation another turn, she addressed her daughters: "My dear girls, cannot you play and sing us something—some of those pieces which you have sung with Miss Von L.?"

The young ladies complied, after some of the gentlemen had seconded the request of their mother, and sang both French and Italian pieces, which they spoiled through their affected and tasteless manner. In the mean time, Mrs. Von P. talked of Colorit, of Weber, Rossini, and Meyerbeer. "Weber," said she, "is whimsical, Rossini poor in melody, but Meyerbeer excels them all; he is truly *le prince de la musique*. You must not imagine, however, Madame Werner," said she, "that I do not value the practice of all the arts. In my opinion, it is art alone which confers on us higher life; and, therefore, I have given to my daughters the same education which I have received myself; they are acquainted with four languages; have great talent; and it is only lately that we have returned from Paris, where they have been to perfect themselves. Have you been to Paris, Madame Werner?"

"No."

"Ah, you must go there soon," said she. "*On vit à Paris, et l'on végète ailleurs*. My dear Maria, do sing the little piece that Count B. sent you. Do you know Count B., Madame Werner?"

"No."

"He comes to us this summer," continued she; "a highly distinguished young man."

"Is your honour acquainted with the family of Grossier Dahl?" asked I, now wearied with being always the respondent.

"No—a little," replied she; "our circles are so different—good, very good people, I believe. I have seen them a few times in company; the—what do you call them—the Dahl—Dahlins, don't mix much in the better society of this place."

"Because they are so old, I presume," said I. "I have heard a great deal of their grand-daughter, Miss Løfven; she must be very amiable."

"She is a very pretty girl," continued Mrs. Von P., "but a poor little, misshapen, sickly creature; she will not live long—the whole family is of fragile health."

"A little, misshapen, sickly creature!" repeated I, greatly astonished; "what in the world—"

But I had not much time to be astonished on this subject, as one of the gentlemen mentioned the new neighbour at Ramm (I began to be half wearied of hearing of the new neighbour), and Mrs. Von P., who seemed as if she feared the conversation might stagnate, threw herself zealously into the subject.

"Oh, that must be an interesting man!" said she, "a true *héros du roman*! His name is Romanus, or Romulus, and he is an Italian of a noble line. He murdered his first wife, and then connected himself with a beautiful English woman, with whom he went to America; there he had a duel with her brother, whom he killed—whereupon the beloved one died of grief; and now he travels all the world over to dissipate his sorrow, and to do good, for his benevolence is as great as his wealth."

I listened in wonder.

"Such circumstances," continued Mrs. Von P., speaking with great affectation, "belong so entirely to our eccentric and passionate times, that we cannot pass sentence on them according to severe moral laws. Deep, passionate, Byronian natures require their own measure; one

must take climate also into consideration, and not require from men under the suns of the south what one expects from those living in our colder north."

I was silently astonished at Mrs. Von P.'s words, and especially by the expression "Our eccentric and passionate age;" but it soon occurred to me that she drew her knowledge of the age only from novels. Observe, good Maria, that I say *only*—because novel-reading is not injurious, except to the exclusion of all other reading.

Long live novels, novel-readers, and novel-writers! especially as I myself am one of them! *Mais revenons à nos moutons*.

The young ladies sang and quavered, and seemed almost to have forgotten that there was such a phrase as to leave off. I went to them, and was mischievous enough to inquire if they ever sang Swedish. Whereupon they answered, No, and began to speak of Malibran, of Paris, and such subjects, without speaking well of any of them.

Affectation, false taste, presumption, how I detect you! and on that account I will now make my escape from the nest of these three owl-sisters.

Mrs. Von P. took a ceremonious and cold adieu, without asking me to come again. I conjecture that music lessons, and my acquaintance with *wall* and *quist* people, made Mrs. Von P. feel that I was not fit to mix in their circles. Well—and she may be right there.

On our way home we met wagons laden with goods for the new neighbour at Ramm. After all I have heard of this man, if he should only be a common, every-day sort of a person, how vexed I shall be!

14th June.

Yesterday afternoon we were at home, and rejoiced on that account. Lars Anders worked like a regular joiner, and I read to him what I had written about our visiting-days. It gave him pleasure; he laughed, and yet he blamed me, at the same time, for having spoken with so much severity of some persons; neither was he quite satisfied with the judgment I had passed on the Von P.s.

"You call them," said he, "a collection of unfortunate pretensions, and yet you have seen them only once. It is very difficult, my dear Fanny, to pass judgment on men after a long acquaintance, and quite impossible to do so after one visit. Beyond this, many persons, under different circumstances, exhibit such different sides of their character. I have seen people affected and ridiculous in society, whom I have admired by a sick-bed; many, in one case wearisome and assuming, who, in another, have been discreet and agreeable. Others, again, have eccentricities at one time which they lose later in life; many turn their best side inward, and perform the noblest actions, while the world is laughing at the fool's cap which they seem to exhibit. It may be so with this family."

"Granted, granted, dear Bear," said I; "and I promise you that, as soon as I become aware of the fair side, I'll paint it in my best colours."

"But were it not better, till then," argued he, "to place the faults more in the shadow? It is exactly by such over-hasty judgments that man injures his neighbour; for nobody reflects that one fault does not spoil the whole person."

"What would you have?" asked I: "you distress me; do you wish that I should throw all I have written into the fire?"

"No, let it be as it is," said he; "the mind of your reader will probably suggest what I have said."

"But, for greater security, Bear, and to ease my own conscience, I will make her partaker of our little conversation."

And this, my best Maria, I have now done. Ah, I shall always remain an over-hasty person, who judges by first impressions!

Forgive me, and love still your

FRANZISKA.

CHAPTER III.

I COME from—a better world; I have been in the kingdom of heaven! Do you wish to know how it looks there?

There was a patriarch and wife; and only to see that ancient, venerable couple, made the heart rejoice. Tranquillity was upon their brows, cheerful wisdom on their lips, and in their glance one read love and peace. A band of angels surrounded them; some little children; others, blooming maidens, of whom one particularly fixed my attention, because she so perfectly answered my idea of a seraph; not because all the other angels surrounded her, not because she was so beautiful—for she was not beautiful—but because she looked so pure and loving, and because she seemed to be there for the happiness of all.

Now she was with the patriarchs, and mutual love beamed from glance and gesture; then she lifted angel-children in her arms, and kissed and embraced them; and then she spoke joyous, graceful words with the angel-maidens. She was a kind, heavenly being, whose happiness seemed to consist in love. She gave a sign, and nectar and delicious fruits were carried around, while she herself took care that the children had as much as their little hands could grasp.

The beauty of innocence seemed throned upon her white and gracefully moulded forehead, which affected me as if by the foresight of a heavenly vision. The expression of her beautiful blue eyes was clear and holy, and had that quiet bashfulness, that candour, which delights us in children. I never saw a glance which expressed so much inward goodness, which spoke so plainly that her whole world was pure blessedness. The light brown hair was of wonderful beauty and brightness, and the skin white and transparent; in short, I never saw a form so much resembling a beautiful soul, nor a manner which so much reminded me of music.

I learned that this affectionate maiden was called Serena, and that the children had assembled to celebrate her birthday. All gathered themselves around her, all stood in need of her, all listened to her, and all were listened to by her.

"Ah, Serena!" said the angel-maidens, "sing us 'The Flower Gatherer,' that lovely, sweet song."

"Oh, Serena!" besought the angel-children, "play to us, that we may dance."

"I will do what you wish," said the kind Serena, "but what shall I do first? I fancy I must first play for the children, and then we will ask the stranger lady to sing us that beautiful song, because she sings it better, certainly, than I do."

Serena sat down and played, while the young danced and the old smiled, so that it was a pleasure to see. After the dance, the fruit-basket

was again carried round, and then Serena asked me, in the name of all, to sing "The Flower Gatherer." I sat down to the piano, and the little band, with oranges in their hands, thronged around me; their rosy cheeks and joyful glances animating my song.

"Ah, once more! once more!" burst forth from all sides, when I had ended; so I sang it yet once, and twice again; the little angels seeming as if they could not be satisfied. The patriarchs thanked me for my song, even as heartily as the children, and I thanked—the poet.

Serena then introduced games of various kinds, and all was laughter and fun during these games; and while I sat by the patriarchs, there stole in one little angel, who possessed a strong portion of earthly covetousness, and took something from the hoard of her sister. Serena, who at that moment was handing nectar to the patriarchs, followed the child with her eyes, and then going after her, took her aside, and said, with a grave, although mild countenance, "Why, little Eva, did you take your sister's apple?—was it right?"

"She had two, and I had none!" stammered out little Eva, frightened, and ready to cry.

"Because you had eaten yours," remarked Serena; "but in no case had you a right to take your sister's fruit; that was very wrong, Eva."

"I thought nobody saw me," said the little one, weeping.

"But if no one else saw you, God saw you; and he does not love children who do what is wrong. Go, now, and lay the apple down again, dear Eva."

Little Eva went and laid down the apple again (if great Eva had only done the same!), and with tears on her cheeks, said to Serena, "But, then, won't you love me any more?"

"Will you promise me not again to take, without permission, what does not belong to you?" asked Serena, softly, but seriously.

"Oh, yes!" sighed the little one, "I won't do so again!"

"Then I shall love you, and you shall be my dear little Eva again," said she, taking the child upon her knee, and letting it quietly weep on her bosom.

This little scene, of which I was a secret spectator, while I was chatting with the old people, gave me a picture and a lesson which I shall not soon forget.

At the Dahls, also, as everywhere else, the new resident at Ramm was spoken of; not in the spirit of extravagant conjecture; some things which were good and noble were related of him; the man certainly was not Don Miguel, and there was joy over him in the kingdom of heaven.

In this kingdom of heaven there was a little sparrow, but not like any sparrow I ever before saw; it was tame, and full of a human-kindness; the angel-children were particularly charmed with it. All was laughter, bustle, and merriment, as the sparrow flew about, sitting ever and anon on their little heads, and "Gold-gelb! gold-gelb!" was repeated by all the jubilant company.

So passed the whole evening, with games, dance, song, and laughter. At one time, the angel-band, conducted by Serena, came and danced round the patriarchs, enclosing us in the joyful circle, till, again breaking loose, in the midst of song, they dispersed to form new groups.

However beautiful and joyous it might be in the kingdom of heaven, still we must think of returning to our little earthly home; so, after we had supped with the angels, we set out on our

way; but the worthy patriarchs and the lovely Serena prayed us so warmly and earnestly to come soon and spend a whole day with them, that we gave our hands upon it; and I must confess that I desired nothing more. On the way home I could talk of nothing but Serena, and went to sleep with her lovely image in my soul.

Perhaps, in time, I may come to see this family in a more prosaic light, and then you will receive a less poetical picture. Life wears offener its every-day than its festival garb. This, however, I know, I have had a heavenly vision.

June 18th.

Away from home may be good, but at home is best! So have I often thought during the two pleasant days I have passed quietly in looking after my own affairs, in taming my Bear and my little animals. All goes on quite well; six hens, three ducks, and two turkeys are now my intimate acquaintance. I have caressed and fed the cows to-day; the fine creatures! the largest and handsomest of which I have christened Audumbla, in memory of the beautiful northern mythology, of which I have read in the symbolical lore of the Edda.

What of my husband? Since he has given up his little vices, he has acquired, God knows how! continually a greater influence over me. This, however, is certain, that he is good and reasonable. Yesterday evening he came into our best sitting-room with the pipe in his mouth, but stood at the doorway looking at me, and made such roguish, questioning grimaces, that I sprang up, embraced both him and his pipe, and drew them both into the room. I was so happy that the pipe did not hate the room—but really too much friendship.

19th.

Miss Hellevi Hausgiebel—sprightliness to the very roof—supper on Svanö; and thus have you yesterday afternoon. She seemed to me like preserved ginger: when one takes a little, one finds it refreshing and delicate, but all day long is quite too much.

"Bear, come here, angel: what say you to this comparison?"

"That it is malicious, and that you yourself are ginger!"

"Ginger! that you are, you bear!"

20th.

The sisters-in-law are come. Yesterday morning we received a note from *Ma chère mère*, inviting us to go for the evening; in the first place, because she wished to see us; and, secondly, because she wished us to receive the relations with her, who were expected that evening at Carlsfors. "If the little wife will come the first," added she, "I shall be right glad to see her; and for that purpose shall send my Norrkopings carriage with the brown horses after dinner to Rosen-vik. For this once I will burden my conscience by separating man and wife; still, if they can come together, so much the pleasanter."

I was very curious to see the brothers-in-law and their wives. My husband, who was overjoyed by the thought of seeing again his beloved brother Peter, could not, however, on account of several patients, reach Carlsfors before evening; so I went alone in the Norrkopings carriage, which is pleasanter than the heaven-chariot.

I found Lagman Håk with *Ma chère mère*. He comes regularly once a week, and brings from the city, where he lives, newspapers and law documents; for *Ma chère mère*, who has a strong sense of right, has many lawsuits. She talks with him

a great deal about her affairs, in which he takes more interest than in his own; and so talk they till coffee comes in, during which meal she shows herself a most agreeable hostess. This lasts till six o'clock; then says *Ma chère mère*, "Now, Lagman, we will walk;" and the two parade, side by side, up and down the large room. This time may be regarded as one of rest; for the two never speak a word, excepting that *Ma chère mère*, who goes with her hands behind her back, says unceasingly, yet almost inaudibly, and only by the movement of the tongue, "Trallala, trallala, trallala! trallala, trallala, trallala!" This walk, which has come to be called trall, lasts, probably, half an hour, on which *Ma chère mère* says, "Now, Lagman, let us sit!" on which the two sit down, and begin to chat again, but not of business, but of the good old times; of the then living remarkable people; relate anecdotes, and drink tea. So have they paraded, tralled, and chatted, above twenty years!

The Lagman has sometimes wonderful fits of absence: he will place himself, for instance, within a doorway, or against a wall, and there stand for hours, in deep thought, without once moving from the spot. Sometimes, at table, too, if he would pour out a glass of water or wine, he never notices when the glass is full, but keeps pouring on till it runs over the table. *Ma chère mère* is not much pleased when such accidents occur; but she never speaks one unfriendly word to him on the subject, but jokes him, merely, on his "poetical distractions." Nevertheless, if she see his large hand reaching towards a bottle, she mostly is beforehand with him.

But I let my pen fly, like a wild bird, from one object to another. I return now to the evening when the relations were expected.

Both *Ma chère mère* and her house were in their most festival garb. The *shurka*, or helmet-cap, sat high and proud on her serious brow, and she marched through the large room, by the Lagman's side, with the air and carriage of a general. All the doors stood open, and all the steps were crowded with servants in livery.

"Welcome now, my dear Franziska," said *Ma chère mère*, reaching to me her hand with a stately bearing; "you will now make the acquaintance of your new family. We shall see what these young ladies are like: in the mean time, my heart! go and do what you like, while I finish my walk."

I took permission, and went to see how the chambers of the sisters-in-law looked. I found the coarse toilet-covers had been replaced with others much finer, which gave me pleasure. In every other respect, too, the rooms were comfortably furnished; all was substantial, convenient, and clean; but I missed something of the poetry, something of the luxury of life, without which life and home would only be mere necessary establishments.

"*Ma chère mère*," thought I, "will leave this to the ladies themselves, will leave them to beautify their own little world, according to their own taste." Although I could not but confess that this was best, I felt irresistibly compelled to anticipate some little; and going, therefore, into the garden, gathered a quantity of flowers, which grow there in superabundance; hastily wove two garlands, one of which I hung over each looking-glass, and then, disposing glasses of flowers about the rooms, pleased myself in no small degree with the friendly aspect they gave. Presently, however, I heard a strong voice be-

hind me. "Yes, indeed! it is your pleasure, is it? to go romping about in my garden, and among my flowers? What did you think I should say to that?"

I turned round, and looked somewhat terrified at the severe countenance of *Ma chère mère*.

"Now, now, don't look so *hébété*," said she, her countenance changing, and patting me on the cheek; "I will say no more than that you are poetical, and, if you choose to fill the chambers of your sisters-in-law with plunder, that is your business, not mine; the thing, however, looks very pretty. I see, my dear, that you are not without taste; and now, if you will have a cup of tea, come out with me, I have no inclination to wait for the young gentry. Hök is standing in the saloon-door in one of his reveries, but we'll see if we cannot wake him."

As I followed her into the saloon, I heard my husband's steps in the next room, and whispered to her, "When he asks after me, you know nothing about me;" and hid myself behind an open door.

Ma chère mère winked her approbation of my little trick, and he entered at the same moment.

"Where is my wife?" asked he, as soon as he had greeted her and kissed her hand.

"I have had no intelligence of her," replied she; "I have not seen her."

"Lord God! where can she be!" exclaimed he, in such an agitated, terrified manner, as quite affected me; so, after he had looked on all sides, and was just turning to leave the room, I sprang forward and clasped my arms around him.

Ah! how sweet it is to know that one is beloved; but, for all that, I would not play such another joke!

"Ha! ha! ha!" laughed out *Ma chère mère*, at our embracing.

Ma chère mère seated herself at the top of the great saloon; called me to sit near her; and then ordered Lars Anders, Lagman Hök, and Tuttin, to arrange themselves in the half circle around her. I saw by this that she was bent upon a great scene, which should be imposing to the young ladies; for thus, in order to approach, they would have to pass up the long saloon. I assure you that my heart was full of sympathy for them; and, in the depths of my soul, I thanked my husband for his kindness in letting me make *Ma chère mère's* acquaintance in the *impromptu* manner I did, thus preventing me having to pass the ordeal of a solemn presentation, which would have been a horror and stumbling-block to me.

Ma chère mère's strong nerves prevented her having any idea of such feelings; and while we sat at our post, she merrily and graphically told of her first presentation at court; and how, for a long time beforehand, she had practised making her reverences before five chairs; and then how these reverences, after this, were performed before the crowned heads themselves.

She described the whole scene, and the principal persons, with so much life and spirit, that I forgot where I sat, and why I sat there, when a carriage was heard approaching.

Ma chère mère paused, and I started up; so did my husband; but she laid immediately her heavy hand interdictingly upon my arm, and said to us both, "Sit still! The old one shall be first to bid them welcome, and the old one will await them here!"

She looked solemn and dignified, and I sat down again with a beating heart. My husband

looked undetermined; but as he listened to the commotion and sound of voices in the hall, he said, "It is only Jean Jacques!" and sat down again.

The next moment steps were heard, and, with a loud voice, a servant announced "Baron Jean Jacques and his lady!"

A silken dress rustled, and a lady entered, probably of my age, but taller, conducted by a gentleman. She looked altogether *comme il faut*, stepped quickly, but with great self-possession, through the room, towards *Ma chère mère*, who raised herself majestically, and, advancing a few paces to meet her, looked highly imposing. The young lady courtesied very deeply, and kissed the offered hands, as I had done, while *Ma chère mère*, in return, kissed her, but only on the forehead; embraced her, and bade her welcome, hoping she would find herself agreeably at home in this house. Next, she saluted Jean Jacques, and that exactly in the same way as she had saluted my husband before.

The new comer and I sat down near each other; at first we were a little excited, but soon calming ourselves, became most friendly, and engaged in an agreeable conversation; in short, I greatly admired this first-seen sister-in-law, by name Jane Maria. She is not handsome, but has something superior in her appearance, while her form is exquisite. Her remarks and demeanour show both gentleness and understanding; her toilet, also, is very pleasing and appropriate; a brown silk dress, a gold chain and watch, a simple, but stylish bonnet, trimmed with clear blue, which accorded admirably with her hair. It always gives me pleasure to see a lady who understands the art of dressing well; it is a sign both of understanding and taste.

"But where is Peter?" asked my husband, at least seven times before the first salutations were over.

"Peter comes later," answered Jean Jacques, at length; "that is, if he come at all to-night. It pleased Ebba," continued he, "to go to sleep at C., where we dined, and she would not wake. Peter called and knocked to no purpose, so, at last, I and my wife left them, in order that *Ma chère mère* might not expect us in vain. I thought Ebba might just as well have slept in the carriage, since she never looks at the country, but sits wrapped up in her double crape cap."

Ma chère mère slightly moved her eyebrows, and Lars Anders drew his down, when, in that very same moment, a carriage drove up to the door.

"There he is," exclaimed my husband, and rushed out, before *Ma chère mère* could call him back, like a bomb, through the open door, to meet his beloved brother. She shook her head, however, and looked angry, while I loved him all the more for his affection to his brother.

Behold, now, the sister-in-law, Number two.

A slight little figure floated in petulantly, but gracefully; the eyes half shut; a little straw hat hanging on the arm; a little cap with rose-coloured ribbons inclined to one ear, and "kissing, as it were, on the other side, several locks of dark brown hair which flowed negligently forth. Her husband followed her with his eyes, while he was stopped in the doorway by a second embrace from his brother.

Ma chère mère raised herself majestically, as on the first occasion, and advanced three steps towards the little sylph; but she, to our great astonishment, floated past, without looking up to

her, and throwing herself negligently into the armed chair, from which *Ma chère mère* had the moment before risen, exclaimed, "Ah, I am so fatigued, so fatigued, so warm, that I must die; ah!" while the silken robe which she wore falling open, showed a fine cambric dress, and, still farther, the very prettiest of all little feet.

Oh, that you could have seen *Ma chère mère*! She stood as if thunderstruck! while Peter, rushing forward, seized Ebba's hand, and, endeavouring to raise her from the chair, whispered, "Ebba, in Heaven's name, bethink thee! Ebba, it is *Ma chère mère*."

"Heavens!" exclaimed Ebba, like one wakened out of a dream, and looked up, with a pair of beautiful brown eyes, to the great lady, just as people look up to a church steeple. *Ma chère mère*, on her side, approached her with a countenance that seemed to express, "Whatever sort of an extraordinary little creature are you?"

As the two were about to meet, Ebba snatched her hand suddenly from her husband's, and, springing upon a chair, threw both her arms around *Ma chère mère's* neck, and kissed her with all the grace and freedom of a child. This seemed to make a peculiar impression on the elder lady, who, grasping her little person in both her large hands, placed her, like a child, in her arms, and carried her under the chandelier, which was then lit up with the beams of the setting sun, and examined what seemed like a cherub's head surrounded with light. Ebba laughed, and we all were obliged to laugh too; while *Ma chère mère's* loud "Ha! ha! ha!" resounded above all. She patted and pinched the cheeks of the ill-trained, but lovely young creature, till her fine dark eyebrows contracted themselves, and she exclaimed, again and again, "Let me go!" But *Ma chère mère*, who wished somewhat to punish her, jested still with her, as people jest with a child; but at length, as tears filled her eyes, she shook her friendly by the hand, kissed her forehead, and saluted Peter with the words, "Chastise your wife, my dear son, otherwise she will chastise you."

Ebba greeted me most ungraciously, never once looked at Lars Anders; but, throwing herself on a sofa, looked through the room and on the company with an air of indifference. *Ma chère mère* made no remark, but saw all this with a certain bitterness of mien which, according to my thought, seemed to say, "We shall soon bring you into order, little malapert."

Notwithstanding all this, Ebba is, from head to foot, the very prettiest little creature that I ever saw. She resembles more a fairy than a human being; but her countenance is somewhat disfigured by an expression of superciliousness and pertness which especially plays around the small mouth and the dilated nostril. It is true that she is very young, but she seems to me to be one of those young creatures who are particularly hard to train. Lars Anders seemed to think the same, and looked upon her and Peter with a troubled air. Peter, to all appearance, is desperately in love with his little humorous wife, who, on her part, does not appear to trouble herself particularly about him; nor does it appear extraordinary that he has not inspired love in such a young, childish creature. Peter is singularly plain in person; has a very large nose, and his yellow-gray hair stands towards all points of the compass. In manner, he is quiet and introverted; yet his eyes, which are handsome, have an expression which is speak-

ing and full of soul. He sat the whole evening as if sunk into himself; pressed Lars Anders's hand sometimes, and glanced often at his wife, who lay on a sofa and slept. The evening would have been very tedious, had it not been for Jean Jacques, who, having travelled abroad but a short time before, related to us various and very interesting accounts of mechanical and industrial undertakings, such as railroads, the Thames tunnel, etc. Jean Jacques, unlike Peter, is very good-looking, has the power of being amusing, and appears to be full of life and knowledge. *Ma chère mère* was greatly pleased with his narratives; and all, indeed, listened to them with the greatest interest; so much, in fact, on my part, that I was sorry when supper was announced.

On the announcement of supper, we all turned towards Ebba, who, indescribably pretty, lay asleep on the sofa, like a rose-bud folded in leaves. I said something of the kind as we stood round her, and was thanked by her husband with one of his fine glances; then, bending over her, he kissed her in order to wake her, saying, "Ebba, my angel, rise!"

"Why cannot you let me rest in quiet? How unbearable you are!" was her loving reply; and she would have composed herself anew to sleep, had not *Ma chère mère* elevated her strong voice. "My dear child," said she, "hear! If you are not ready to come with us to table this moment, you will have nothing to eat. Don't imagine that anybody will give themselves trouble on your account."

The little one opened her eyes in the greatest astonishment, raised herself, and, without another word, *Ma chère mère* took her hand and led her into the eating-room. Ebba allowed herself to be led, but with a look of indescribable ill-humour. *Ma chère mère*, however, was extremely amiable towards her, seated her by her, and showed her a thousand little attentions. There was something so irresistibly inciting in *Ma chère mère's* friendliness, that even Ebba yielded, like the rose to the rays of the sun, the ill-humour vanished; and then, indeed, she became unspeakably lovely, and the little Love's head appeared quite bewitching. She ate, laughed, and chatted with *Ma chère mère*, who busied herself with her. Peter looked quite happy; Jean Jacques talked with Tuttin, who looked no less fortunate, about English roast beef and French *omelette soufflée*. I kept up a continued conversation with Jane Maria, whose obliging demeanour and agreeable style of conversation pleased me more and more. Lars Anders sat silent near his brother, and looked dissatisfied.

At the conclusion of the meal, *Ma chère mère* ordered a steaming bowl of punch to be brought in, filled the glasses for us all, and gave a sign with the hand for the servants to withdraw. We all at once became suddenly silent, as if expecting something extraordinary; and *Ma chère mère*, after she had cleared her throat, raised her sonorous voice, and spoke with earnestness and strength to the following effect:

"My sons and daughters, I will say this to you, because I see you all here assembled round my table and in my house, for the first time; I will say this to you, my children, because I still wish to see you often here, as three united and happy families.

"In an old regulation for soldiers, which was in possession of my deceased husband, General Mansfield, it was said that only in the moment when the fight commenced should the order be

given to the troops, and this order consisted but of three words—"Do your best!"

"This rule may also be of some value to the married. Books of education, the advice of fathers and mothers, the precepts of teachers, continue to the altar of Hymen; but there they all pause, and merely say to the wedded pair, 'Do your best!' After this, truly, it is not an easy task to give counsel. Every marriage has its own freemasonry, the one unlike the other, with which it is not well for the uninitiated to meddle. But some good advice, my children, you may listen to with profit, from an old lady who has seen some little of the world, and who has had some little experience in the freemasonry of married life; and if you, in your married career, profit by these counsels, it will be well for you. Thus—

"If, my children, you would be happy, avoid sour looks and changeful humours. By these, people entice Satan into their houses. 'A little cloud,' says the proverb, 'can hide both sun and moon.' Yes, my daughters, guard against what may be called 'bad weather' in the house; and you, my sons, take heed that you are not the November storm that calls it there.

"Remember what the proverb says, 'Peace cherished is strife banished.' I have, my children, seen that in you already which displeases me; but I hope it will all pass by, and be amended; therefore I will say no more about it.

"Deceive not one another in small things or in great. One little, single lie has, before now, disturbed a whole married life. A small cause has often great consequences. Fold not the hands together and sit idle—'Laziness is the devil's cushion.' Do not run much from home—'One's own hearth is gold worth.'

"Many a marriage, my friends, begins like the rosy morning, and then falls away like a snow-wreath. And why, my friends? Because the married pair neglect to be as well-pleasing to each other after marriage as before. Endeavour always, my children, to please one another; but, at the same time, keep God in your thoughts. Lavish not all your love on to-day, for remember, that marriage has its to-morrow likewise, and its day after to-morrow too. Spare, as one may say, fuel for the winter.

"Consider, my daughters, what the word housewife* expresses. The married woman is her husband's domestic faith; in her hands he must be able to confide house and family; be able to intrust to her the key of his heart, as well as the key of his eating-room. His honour and his home are under her keeping: his well-being is in her hand. Think of this!

"And you, my sons, be faithful husbands and good fathers of families. Act so that your wives shall esteem and love you.

"And what more shall I say to you, my children? Read the Word of God industriously; that will conduct you through storm and calm, and safely bring you to the haven at last; for the remainder, do your best! I have done mine. God help and bless you altogether."

With these words she extended her arms as if to bless us, made a solemn greeting with her head, and emptied her glass to the bottom.

Ebba was insolent enough to let a very gentle yawn be audible, nor did she even raise her glass, but, reclining backward in her chair, clo-

sed her eyes, while Jane Maria emptied hers with a very becoming air. For myself, I must acknowledge that I thought the beginning of the speech heavy, and could hardly refrain from smiling; but, by degrees, the earnestness and energy of *Ma chère mère's* words took hold of me, and, by the time the speech was ended, Lars Anders and I heartily drank to each other and to *Ma chère mère*.

When the *skål* was drunk, *Ma chère mère* rung for the servants to enter, and taking, with the stiffest general's mien, the arm of Lagman Hök, she ordered us to pass, two and two, before her—mustered us, as it were. In passing her, she clapped me on the shoulder, and said, "You are the least!" (This is not true, since I have measured myself with Ebba, and am half a head taller than she; but *Ma chère mère* has pleasure in jesting with me.) Ebba, however, would not arrange herself according to command, would walk by herself; and, in order to escape from her husband, she skipped like a bird round about us and among us. *Ma chère mère* closed the procession with Lagman Hök.

We sat chatting for some time after supper, and then *Ma chère mère* conducted the young people to their rooms; I following, and Lars Anders, also, who would not be left out in anything. Ebba's good humour continued, but it exhibited itself in laughter and jests over the old-fashioned furniture; on which account *Ma chère mère* read her a grave lecture, to which the strange young creature listened attentively, and when it was ended kissed her hand and courted with comic humility. She is a sweet, ill-educated child, and appears singularly ill-calculated for the wife of the grave, quiet Peter. Jane Maria, on the contrary, seemed perfectly satisfied with everything, and remarked my flowers with delight; in fact, showing, by her rational, well-bred behaviour, a perfect contrast to the eccentric wildness of Ebba. *Ma chère mère* was in high good-humour, and jested with us all, if not in the most refined manner, yet certainly with great wit. There is something peculiar about her, which captivates every one. I observed also, this evening, how, through her clear-headed, unequivocal arrangements, she gives satisfaction and security to all around her. Thus she immediately assigned to every one of us our places, and one soon finds the advantage of regulating one's self according to her rules.

Ma chère mère invited Lars Anders and me to dine the next day with the family. I was glad of it, for I wish to see them intimately. I anticipate for myself a friend in Jane Maria, and my heart covets female friends; for, since I have lost you, Maria, I am conscious of a great want in my life, which writing cannot supply; and if I won Jane Maria's love, I should not have the less friendship for you.

But to return to the last evening, to Lars Anders, to Rosenvik. Arrived there, I imparted to him my remarks on brothers and sisters-in-law. But he was so deep in one reflection, that he only replied to all I said with a sigh, and the words, "Poor Peter!"

Somewhat impatient over the everlasting "Poor Peter!" I said, at length, "Well, then, Peter must act wisely, like a certain Lars Anders; he must improve his wife by kindness and reason, and then he must submit himself to her tyranny." Lars Anders said pretty things in return, with a kind countenance, but then, after all, he wound up with the words "Poor Peter!"

* Housewife, in Swedish, *Hustru*; that is, derivatively, the house-faith or trust.

He troubles himself truly on account of Ebba; calls her a witch, and will not grant that she is lovely; on the contrary, Jane Maria pleases him as much as she pleases me.

I go now to dress for dinner, and send you a thousand kisses with my letter.

CHAPTER IV.

Rosenvik, June 21st.

THE dinner went off very well yesterday. *Ma chère mère* was cheerful and kind; Ebba well-mannered, and lovely as the morning; Jane Maria perfectly elegant and well-dressed; yet I could have desired a little more freedom, and have wished, also, the large *stövne* away from the forehead, for nothing pleases me which overshadows the brow. Jean Jacques was entertaining, with his interesting relations. Lagman Hök, however, poured half a *caraf* of water over the table, which greatly embarrassed him; so much so, indeed, that, some time afterward, when Jean Jacques was describing, with great energy, a certain winged steam-carriage in which people might travel through the air, to which the Lagman appeared to listen with the most fixed attention, thereby animating Jean Jacques to extraordinary energy, he suddenly interrupted him with the question, "Pardon me, Mr. Baron, but of which *caraf* were you speaking?" at which *Ma chère mère* laughed, and Jean Jacques looked annoyed.

Jean Jacques talks a great deal. To-day I found it somewhat wearying, especially after dinner. At length I heard only a continued hum, out of which the words Railroad, Manchester, Tunnel, Steam-engine, Penny Magazine, alone struck my ear. The more Jean Jacques described the sleeper I became, and at length he fairly gave up his unworthy listener. But a singular occurrence speedily awoke me out of my drowsiness.

Ma chère mère was sitting on the sofa, arranging the well-used patience-cards for the blockade of Copenhagen; Lagman Hök was sitting near her, taking snuff; and a young servant was handing about coffee, when Jean Jacques exclaimed, "Heavens! how like he is to Bruno!"

All at once, *Ma chère mère's* patience-table received a blow, which sent it, with the blockade of Copenhagen, spinning to the floor; yet no one looked at anything but *Ma chère mère*, who had become deadly pale. The nose was contracted, the lips blue, and the breath emitted with a strong, heavy sound. Then raising herself, like a fermenting billow, she shook her clinched fist at Jean Jacques, while the eyes seemed starting from the head. It was a figure to excite a shudder; and Jean Jacques, growing pale likewise, drew himself back. It was terrible to see her; and I awaited, almost breathless, some fearful catastrophe. But she stood as if stiffened into that threatening attitude, immovable and speechless, as if under the spell of a terrible enchantment, or as if some horror-exciting ghost had passed before her. For a long time she stood thus, and only the wild, audible breathing gave evidence of the strong inward emotion.

While I gazed upon her thus, my terror changed into anguish of heart, and I was about to hasten to her, when Lars Anders held me back; and while he threw his arm round my waist to detain me, he himself sat still and attentively observed her. No one approached her;

and, after a few moments, the fearful emotion passed by of itself. The clinched hand sunk; colour returned to her countenance, and her eyes grew milder; she breathed deeply several times, always lower, as if she sighed, and then, without speaking a word, or even looking round on any one, passed, with slow steps, from the room, closing the door after her. Notwithstanding this, I would have followed, had not Lars Anders restrained me; but seeing me restless and excited, he took me aside, and, in a few words, gave an explanation of this extraordinary and painful scene.

"*Ma chère mère*," said he, "had herself one son, called Bruno."

"And is he dead?" interrupted I, interrogatively.

"Yes."

"And on this account," asked I, astonished, "can his name and the remembrance of him agitate her so much?"

"Not merely on that account," he replied; "he occasioned her great sorrow, and everything that reminds her of him, especially the pronouncing his name, agitates her thus powerfully. But one must allow these outbreaks to pass over unobserved; they pass over quickest when she is left entirely to herself."

"But what became of her son?" I asked.

"It is a long history," he replied; "I will tell you another time, Fanny."

"Another time is a villain!" said I. "I hate another time! I can wait no longer than this evening."

"Well, then," said he, "this evening; but we must not longer stand whispering here."

As we returned to the company, we found Lagman Hök sitting on the sofa at the patience-table, endeavouring to rearrange the pieces exactly as they were before they were upset, that *Ma chère mère*, on her return, might not, by any circumstance, be reminded of the scene which had just occurred. When he had succeeded in arranging the pieces, he took snuff, and sneezed nine times successively, which convulsed Ebba with laughter. His solicitude for *Ma chère mère* affected me; such attention is amiable: so ought friends to have care one for another.

I believe I have never sketched the Lagman's portrait; behold it, then, done hastily. He may be probably sixty years of age, is thin and tall, has long feet, long hands, a long neck, and a large countenance, in which traces of smallpox, and furrows, and a large aquiline nose, leave no beauty; and yet you must except a pair of eyes, which, under heavy eyebrows, have a quiet, kind, and pleasant expression. They remind one of the impression made upon one by the friendly shimmering light, seen through the windows of a hostel, on a cold autumn evening. He seems, good man, as if he had a peg in every limb; and never did I see so long and stiff a back as his! I never can see him without wondering how he ever can be suspected of poetical fancies. *Ma chère mère*, however, has firm faith on this point. For the rest, I can say little, as, excepting with *Ma chère mère*, he seldom speaks with any one. His voice, his whole demeanour, is soft; yet, although he is so quiet and silent, one can never forget that he is in the room; for, excellent man, as he certainly is, he takes such an immense quantity of snuff, that heaps of it lie where he has been sitting; yet, after all, that is not so very bad!

While Lagman Hök laid the patience in order, and Jane Maria, Jean Jacques, and I were

talking of music, Ebba had an opportunity to exhibit her cleverness. In the first place, she drew the needles out of my stocking, overturned Lagman Hök's snuff-box, and, after other misdeemeanours, crept behind Lars Anders and Peter, who had laid their heads together in a deep conversation, and sewed their coat-laps together. The good brothers foreboded nothing wrong; neither did I, who, wishing to take advantage of the fine weather, proposed a walk, to which all consented; and both stood up, when, *valsch, blatsch*, resounded it, and the two coat-laps were violently torn asunder. Lars Anders gave a desperate leap, and made the most horrid of grimaces. It was impossible for me to avoid loud laughter, and, in a paroxysm of childish delight, Ebba threw herself on the sofa. Peter seemed not to know how to take the affair; and Lars Anders, who at first was irritated at both Ebba and me, I believe, swore afterward good-humouredly at us both. Jane Maria shook her head, and yet laughed; but afterward, as she sat down to her beautiful tapestry, and saw that there, also, Ebba had been at work, she became quite red, and, casting a stern glance upon her, said something, in a very bitter tone, about "unpardonable impertinence."

While poor Lagman Hök sat quite still, endeavouring to collect together his snuff, I proposed the walk anew; to which all assented, excepting Ebba, who, lying negligently on the sofa, declared that, as long as she remained in the country, she would never set her foot out of doors; that she abominated country dust and country roads, and that green was injurious to her eyes, &c. In vain we tried to persuade her; in vain Jane Maria talked to her of her childish folly; she continued wilfully adhering to her determination, and Peter—stopped at home with her. And now, like my husband, I must sigh to myself, "Poor Peter!"

Lagman Hök also remained still sitting where he was, probably waiting the return of his friend; and, under pretence of fetching a shawl, I stole to the door of *Ma chère mère's* chamber, and listened there, full of restless sympathy. I heard, however, nothing but a spasmodic yawn, and, greatly relieved on her account, followed my party on their walk.

The weather was lovely; Jean Jacques talked with his brother of the new arrangements he intended to make on the estate, and blamed *Ma chère mère's* old-fashioned management: to which the other replied by a variety of wry faces, and by puffing prodigious volumes of smoke out of his pipe. Jane Maria and I fell into discourse on Bulwer's and Miss Martineau's excellent novels, which gave me pleasure. I found her well read, and acquainted with several languages, whereupon we agreed to read together Dante's "Commedia Divina," which will be charming.

While we were rejoicing on this subject, we turned into a lovely woodpath by a mill, the rushing of whose waters we had heard through the wood, when suddenly I became aware of an object which made me pause, and pluck Lars Anders by the sleeve, to make him observant of the same. All stood still, and looked to the left, where the sun shone upon an open green space. A man of a strong, almost athletic figure, in a dark, handsome riding-dress, was passing under the oaks which grew there. He passed slowly, *his arms crossed over his breast, and his head depressed, as if in deep thought; near, or, more correctly speaking, behind him, went a hand-*

some, glossy-black horse, whose bridle was richly set with studs of silver: the rein hung loose, and the beautiful head now bent itself to the grass, and now caressingly raised itself to the shoulder of its master, who appeared accustomed to this, and left his faithful attendant at full liberty.

We had only a glimpse of the man's profile, since he was passing from us, but it gave us the augury of a dark, gloomy countenance. Thus went man and horse onward, in friendly understanding with each other, deeper into the wood, and vanished at last from our view; but our conjectures followed him, and we came to the fixed and unanimous conclusion that this was no other than our so-much-spoken-of mysterious neighbour at Ramm. And now, whether he be called *Romulus* or *Romanus*, whether he may justify Mrs. Von P.'s romance or not, this is certain, that his appearance before us, and his exterior, had a truly romantic air. I confess that I am quite curious to see more of him, for I am convinced that, if I could only see him face to face, I should immediately know whether he be a *Don Miguel* or a *Howard*, as the account we heard of him at the Dahl's might lead me to suspect.

When we returned to the house, after about an hour's wandering, we found *Ma chère mère* sitting in the anteroom by her patience-table, and Lagman Hök beside her, all looking as if nothing remarkable had happened, excepting that *Ma chère mère's* countenance was unusually pale and earnest. She motioned to us kindly on our entrance, but spoke with no one. Tutin gave us tea, and then Jane Maria sat down to the piano and played a heavy piece from Hertz, more difficult, as it seemed to me, than beautiful. But how she plays! She is a perfect mistress of the piano; the only pity is that she has no voice, else we would sing together; but, however, she can accompany me. I am fortunate in having her for a sister-in-law; what a difference between her and Ebba! Ebba, too, through the whole of the evening, was amiable, excepting that she insisted on everybody dancing; and, as nobody showed an inclination for this, she began to dance by herself in the next room, and sang the while very prettily. Peter's eyes dwelt upon her with delight; and I wondered not at it, for she is a little Grace, when she is gentle and happy. Partly to please her, and partly led by a secret desire for dancing myself, I enticed, after a few minutes, company to her. We lead in Jean Jacques, and at last Peter, and danced for a while in the gayety of our hearts, to her indescribable joy.

But in a while the gentlemen grew tired and left us; and then Ebba, seating herself in a corner of a sofa near me, began to tell of all the balls of a former winter which she had attended in Stockholm, and how she was dressed, and how often, especially by this person and the other, she was engaged to dance, till an irresistible fit of yawning seized me, and would soon have conducted me to the arms of sleep, had not over-loud talking in the anteroom made me interrupt Ebba's discourse, in order to hasten there.

Ma chère mère played Boston with Jane Maria, Lagman H k, and Lars Anders, and was now angry with Jane Maria, who, as I suppose, played better than she, and, some way or other, had made *Ma chère mère bete*. I only heard the words, "How can you think of not following, when you have four trumps and the king of spades in the elder hand?"

"I don't think of following," replied Jane Maria,

in a tone of vexation, "when I see that I cannot make my play."

"And on that account I am to become *bete*," said *Ma chère mère*, angrily; "and I was renounce in clubs, and you in diamonds!"

They were quite at strife; but this scene was interrupted by the entrance of the book-keeper, who came in to complain of two stable-boys, who refused to obey his commands. *Ma chère mère* allowed him to state distinctly the nature of his commands, and the refusal of the boys; and, as this evidenced great forwardness on their parts, her countenance became severe, and she started up hastily. Jean Jacques stood up also; but she motioned him down again, went out, and returned almost immediately in her Januarius and helmet, and, accompanied by the complainant, went off with great strides for the stable.

"How has it gone on?" asked Lars Anders, as, in about ten minutes, she returned, apparently refreshed by the rectification.

"How can it be other than right?" returned she, cheerfully. "I gave them words, and not songs; thus they perceive whereabouts they are, and then I should like to see if they would dare disobey; for the rest, there was no danger with the people. Tannerström is too easy, and that he must be told, too. But so it is; all would use the axe, but nobody fetch the handle; all would be masters, but nobody will bear the burden."

Supper was announced, and she was, as usual, the most polite and active of hosts; all trace of the afternoon's scene had vanished.

Late in the evening, as we were once more in our quiet home, I asked and received from Lars Anders the following explanation of the unhappy family affairs, which, as nearly as possible, I give in his own words:

"*Ma chère mère* had, by General Mansfield, one only son, who was called Bruno, after his father. His birth nearly cost the life of the mother, and that which she had bought so dearly was more precious to her than life itself. Many a time has she been on her knees by his cradle, as if worshipping him; many a time, when a slight indisposition has made his night restless, has she sat and watched by him. She suckled him herself; scarcely would permit any one besides herself to nurse him, scarcely to touch him. He slept in her bosom, he rested on her knee; her arms were his world, and they encircled him with undying love; and he, on his side, wild and despotic as he then was, hung on her neck with the utmost tenderness, and seemed to find rest nowhere but upon her bosom. It was beautiful to see them together; they were the lioness and her cub, who, in a union of savage strength and deep tenderness, combat together and caress at the same time. Thus the relation between mother and son was extraordinary, and sometimes hostile, even from the cradle. One day, as she laid him, a child but nine months old, to her breast, either in hunger or passion, he bit her severely with his young coming teeth. Transported with the pain, the mother gave him a blow. The child let go the breast, and refused from that moment ever to take it again. He was weaned; for the mother could not tolerate the idea of his being nourished with the milk of a nurse. Afterward, in his eighth year, as she would have given him a well-deserved correction, he turned like a young lion and struck her.

"Still, in the midst of scenes which exhibited on both sides the most ungovernable character, instances almost daily occurred which showed

unlimited power of self-sacrifice; she threw herself between him and every danger; and he would kiss the very traces of her feet. When they met, even after a short separation, it was ever an outbreak of the warmest love; still, the next moment, perhaps, they would be at strife with each other. This state of feeling increased with years, for both were of the same powerful, determined character. They seemed unable to live either together or apart.

"It would have been impossible to find anywhere a handsomer boy than Bruno was; and yet, although the mother worshipped him in her heart, her sense of justice was so strict, that she never, not even in the slightest instance, favoured him to his stepbrothers' disadvantage. Never, if he deserved punishment, was he spared before them; never had a preference shown to him in regard of pleasure or reward; in no way had he the advantage of them, excepting the caresses of his mother.

"We were all brought up with severity; and as regards money, were too scantily supplied. For myself, I always had an inclination towards economy; nevertheless, I was compelled to have recourse to my own innocent industry to supply myself with postage-money, or the means to obtain any little outlay which *Ma chère mère* considered superfluous; hence I became, in secret, a carpenter.

"Bruno was naturally extravagant and prone to dissipation; and very early, in order to gratify his palate, or to appease his thirst for pleasure, resorted to less innocent means. He purloined what he could not obtain voluntarily, first from his brothers, then from the domestics; but no one dared to punish him for this, or to represent it to his mother; for the fiery-tempered boy, gifted with almost Herculean strength, had obtained power over his brothers, and was feared not only by them, but by all the household. He was beloved by none, excepting by me; I cannot exactly say what it was in him that was so captivating to me; I admired, it is true, his great natural abilities. His wild and witty tricks often decoyed me to smile, at the same time that I was compelled to blame; but what operated most upon me was the simple fact, that I really think he liked me."

Lars Anders said this with an agitated voice, remained silent a few moments, and then continued.

"I must do him the justice, however, to say, that he never was disobedient to those who spoke to him with mildness and reason. More than once he abandoned, at my request, unworthy pursuits, and often would he weep bitterly, when I represented to him his unfortunate first steps in the path of vice.

"But I was seldom at home at this time; for, much older than he, I had finished my academical life as he began his, and was always from home, in the pursuit of my medical profession.

"The influence which a child, a little girl, had over Bruno, from his thirteenth to his sixteenth year, was very extraordinary. This was Serena Löfven, with whom you were so greatly pleased the other day in the city. She was, at that time, a lovely, quiet, but sickly child; and *Ma chère mère*, who had always a great esteem for Madame Dahl, prevailed upon her for three years to bring her, during the summer months, to Ramm, in order, partly by the water of a mineral spring, and partly by the fresh country air to improve Serena's health. The little angel

like child interested the wild Bruno, and it was wonderful to see what constraint he had over himself, and of what self-denial he was capable on her account. He left all, to carry her out into the woods about Ramm; to caress her, or to sit quietly by and watch her while she slept. On holydays, or whenever he had a holyday, he went wandering forth early in the morning with a basket of eatables in his hand, and Serena on his arm, and seldom were the two seen again before evening. All this improved Serena's health, and softened the temper of Bruno. One tear, or one prayer from her childish lips, was to him a more effectual incentive than all the commands of his mother or of his teachers.

"If this better part of Bruno's nature had been cultivated—the violent repressed and the gentle yielded to—I am convinced that he would have become a good and distinguished man; but his tutor, a person of rigid, unbending character, and, still more, his mother, seemed to have resolved only to make use of power in the subjection of his undisciplined will.

"All this time *Ma chère mère* foreboded not how perilous was the course which Bruno was pursuing, and I myself knew nothing which I should have feared so much as her making the discovery—she, so proud, so sensitive on every point of honour, so rigid in her principles, and her whole moral conduct! Bruno's great beauty, his remarkable abilities and natural talents, his expertness in all bodily exercises, his courage, nay, even his overbearing, constituted her pride, and made her eyes sparkle with delight at his approach, or even the very speaking of his name. To have heard anything dishonourable of him, must have been a death-blow to her. Bruno, too, had pride and sense of honour, and the approbation of his mother was necessary to him; but his violent passions, and his inability to govern them, drew him perpetually into guilty conduct.

"But now came a time when I passed several summer months at Ramm, and where, from what I saw of him, I hoped he had abandoned his evil courses. He had been confirmed in the spring, and now appeared thoughtful and mild. The connexion between him and his mother seemed more peaceful and affectionate than ever. I hoped he had conquered the darker part of his nature; he himself, too, said the same thing to me. But one thing I could not even then help observing: he had his own private expenses, and those to an extent far greater than his own means ought to have allowed. For some time, it is true, I had been in a condition to assist him with money, and had hoped by this means to restrain him, and prevent his application to improper purposes. He frequently requested money from me, and I furnished him with as much as was in my power; but one day he requested so large a sum as astonished me. I refused; in fact, I could not do otherwise; and at the same time reproved him for this extravagance. He made no reply, but ground his teeth angrily, and left me. This was the last day we were to spend at home together; on the following he was to leave for the University and I for S—. That forenoon he went to the city to take leave of the old Dahls, and of his little bride, as he called Serena, and was not expected back till evening.

"Immediately after dinner the book-keeper entered the room in great agitation. He had mis-

very morning he had placed in his desk, and that he must suspect the thief to be one of the household, as no one but those accustomed to the house knew where he was in the habit of keeping his money.

"It was the first time, as *Ma chère mère* believed, that such a circumstance had occurred in the house; she therefore took up the affair with the greatest warmth, and immediately undertook a domiciliary search.

"Accompanied by the book-keeper and two of her oldest and most faithful servants, she went through the whole house, examined every corner, and examined all her domestics with the greatest severity; even the oldest among them were compelled to submit to the search. As nothing was discovered anywhere, not even the slightest trace which could lead to suspicion, she began to think that probably the informer himself might be the thief; and thus the possessions of the young book-keeper, and even the clothes which he wore, were subject to a yet more severe scrutiny than those of the others had been.

"This young man happened to be a personal enemy of Bruno; and, whether he really suspected him, or whether he spoke in the bitterness which *Ma chère mère's* proceedings towards him awakened, I knew not, but he said, with unmitigated chagrin: 'Your honour may perhaps find nearer home what you seek!'

"'What do you mean?' demanded she, with an awful glance.

"'That your honour,' replied the irritated man, 'may find with your own flesh and blood that for which you have cast suspicions on innocent men!'

"'Man, you lie!' exclaimed *Ma chère mère*, pale with rage, seizing him and shaking him by the arm.

"'I will be a liar!' returned he, almost beside himself with passion, 'if one of your own sons be not a thief!'

"'Follow me!' said she; and with flashing eyes and pale cheeks, accompanied by the book-keeper and the two old servants, she went into our chamber.

"I had been out, and had only just returned and been informed of what occurred, as *Ma chère mère*, with her attendants, entered. I cannot describe the sensation which I felt at that moment; a foreboding of the true fact passed through me; I became pale, and involuntarily seated myself on Bruno's travelling-chest, which, together with mine, stood ready packed for the journey. *Ma chère mère* looked at me with a penetrating glance, started, and became paler, while, with a firm voice, she said to me and my brothers, who had also come into the room,

"'My sons, for the honour of the house, you must submit to the same search to which all the rest in the house have submitted. I need not tell you that all this is merely *pro forma*, and that I am convinced of your innocence.'

"With this, she cast upon me a glance which was at that time inexplicable to me, and, passing my chest by, went and sought among my brothers' things. After this, she returned to the room and opened my packed-up chest. Everything was turned out, but nothing was found which had no right there, and, at the bottom of all, they found my carpenter's tools. When all had been examined, *Ma chère mère* cast upon me a glance full of maternal love and joy. Alas! she had had suspicions of me—of the thoughtful man, rather than the wild youth! and now she

raised her head, and one could read, in her strong, expressive countenance, 'Thank God! now I am easy.'

"Now, then, there are only the things of the young baron left," said one of the old servants, respectfully; 'but the chest is locked, and, besides this, it is not necessary.'

"That may be," said *Ma chère mère*, 'but he must fare like the rest; the box shall be broken open.'

"But the young baron—is not at home," said the servant, anxiously; 'we cannot—'

"His mother commands it," said she, warmly.

"It was done."

"With her own hands the mother took out books and clothes, which had been thrown in in great disorder. Presently the hand was withdrawn, as if it had been burned by red-hot iron; she had stumbled upon a bundle of notes. It was the missing money. She took it out; turned it about in her hand; examined it as if she could not believe her own eyes; grew paler and paler; and then exclaiming, in a voice of inexpressible anguish, 'My blood! my own flesh and blood!' sank, as if lifeless, to the floor."

"We carried her out; and our exertions, at length, recalled her to consciousness. Terrible was her awaking. But she shed no tear, uttered no word of anger or complaint. She appeared strong and determined."

"She sent immediately to Pastor Rhen, the clergyman of the district. He was a man of iron; stern, strong, and one ready to combat, with word or deed, in support of what he considered right; and, more than this, he was an honest and faithful friend of *Ma chère mère*. To him she confided this painful circumstance, and they two decided the steps which should be taken in consequence. I anticipated what was designed, and made use of the influence I had frequently found myself to possess with *Ma chère mère*, to induce her, but in vain, to resort to less severe, or, at all events, less violent measures. But all my representations were useless; she merely answered, 'Unpunished crime only induces to still farther crime. Bitter must be atoned for by bitter.'

"In the evening, about the time when Bruno was expected to return, myself, my three brothers, the old servants, and the book-keeper, were ordered into *Ma chère mère's* apartment. The room was dimly lighted; and there, in its gloomy half-light, sat, in a tall armed chair, Bruno's mother, with Pastor Rhen beside her; her countenance bearing traces of the sorrow which she bore in her heart. But over sorrow, and shame, and anger, there prevailed such an expression of stern determination as I never saw before in a human countenance."

"Thus, then, was assembled that small, but fearful court of judgment, before which Bruno was to be cited. Here we awaited him—a terrible hour! during which no one spoke; but I saw in that dull light the drops of cold sweat stand like beads on the brow of that unhappy mother."

"It was towards the end of September; a stormy evening, and a gusty wind shook the casements. One moment it was still, and then, then, we heard the fiery clatter of a horse's hoofs on the court pavement. *Ma chère mère* trembled as I had never seen her before. I heard a dismal rattling, not of the casements, but of her teeth, as they chattered together. My brothers wept; the old servants stood dumb, and with downcast glances; an expression of remorse

was on the countenance of the book-keeper; and even the iron-souled pastor seemed gasping for breath."

"The door was quickly opened, and Bruno stepped in. I see him at this moment, as if he stood before me as he was then, warm from riding, and from the storm; full of health and spirit; I never saw him handsomer than then! He came to his mother, longing, as he always did, even after only a day's absence, to throw himself into her arms; but, as he reached the door, he paused, started, and threw a terrified glance on his mother, who covered her face with her hands. Bruno grew pale, looked round upon us, and then again upon her; she cast a flashing glance upon him, and his countenance fell; he became yet paler, and stood there a criminal."

"At that moment her voice was heard, hollow and stern, to accuse him of theft; and, pointing to his rifled chest, and to the money which had been found in it, she demanded his confession."

"Bruno acknowledged himself guilty, with an inconceivably bold haughtiness."

"'Fall upon your knees, and receive your punishment!' said the stern judge. But Bruno bent not. A consciousness, which, after his haughty confession, seemed to have deprived him of all volition, overwhelmed him; he stood pale as death, his head dropped upon his breast, and his eyes riveted to the ground."

"Pastor Rhen approached him. 'Young man,' said he, in a low voice, 'you have grievously sinned against the commands of God, and against your mother. Acknowledge your guilt, and submit to your punishment!'

"Bruno stood, as if deprived both of speech and hearing; and the pastor, taking his silence for consent, began to read, in a strong, solemn voice, the customary questions of church penance: 'Dost thou not know that, by thy crime, thou hast not only grievously offended against God, but hast occasioned scandal in this community?'

"These words seemed to rouse Bruno from his lethargy; he raised his head proudly; a fiery glance shot from his eyes, but he made no reply."

"Once more the question was repeated, and he yet remained silent."

"'Fall upon your knees, sinner!' exclaimed *Ma chère mère*, raising herself, and in an awful voice."

"Bruno cast a dark and threatening glance upon her, which she returned, and then he replied proudly, 'I will not! What,' demanded he, 'has this priest to do with me? I have not desired him. If he be here about confessions of guilt, others may come in question as well as I! Exasperate me not, or—'

"'Silence!' said *Ma chère mère*, gloomily, 'and answer only to my demands. Acknowledge, are you alone guilty in this theft?'

"Bruno answered only by a dark glance."

"Answer!" said she, hastily, 'answer! Is there any partner with you in this guilt?'

"Bruno cast another long look on his mother; and then, with a firm voice, said, 'No, I alone am guilty.'

"'Bow down your knee, then, unhappy one!' said she. 'Your mother, whom you have covered with shame, commands you to endure the dishonour which you have deserved. Fall down!'

"Bruno stamped his foot in wild rage, clinched his fist, and darted a furious glance at her."

"'Compel him down, you people!' cried M

chère mère, in terrible anger. 'Priest, if thou art a man, bow the disobedient, degenerate son to the earth. Make him humble himself before the commands of the Lord.'

"I was about to step between them; but, the moment the pastor laid his strong hands on Bruno's shoulders, they were flung off again, with a violence which whirled the pastor completely round.

"'Layest thou hands on the servant of the Lord?' exclaimed the pastor, in a phrensy of rage, forgetting himself, and seizing Bruno with a sinewy grasp. But Bruno had the strength and elasticity of the lion; and, after a strong struggle, the pastor lay stretched on the floor.

"'Seize him! hold him!' exclaimed *Ma chère mère*, beside herself.

"The book-keeper, and one of my brothers, who attempted to hold him, soon laid by the pastor; and then Bruno, starting back a few paces, seized a staff which stood in a corner of the room, and swinging it over his head, threatened, with the expression of mad phrensy, to strike it upon the face of any one who should dare to approach him.

"No one dared to do so, except his mother. 'Remain where you are,' said she to the others; and then, with firm steps and quiet mien, she approached him, laid her hand upon his head, bowed him down before her, and asked, in a voice which made the blood freeze in my veins, whether he would submit himself to her will, or receive her curse.

"Mother and son looked at each other with eyes of flame and defiance. They stood so long. Again she repeated the question; and then followed terrible words on both sides. Again all was still; the curse-speaking lips became stiff, the haughty glance dimmed, and mother and son sank, fainting, together.

"Both were carried to their separate chambers—"

Lars Anders paused here; and I, shuddering, laid my head upon his shoulder, exclaiming, "Oh, horrible! horrible!"

"They returned to consciousness," continued he, after a silence of some moments, "but did not see each other that evening. I sought to speak with him; but he affected to be sleeping, and I returned to my chamber.

"In the night, when all was dark and still, we heard a wild, prolonged, and thrilling cry from his room. I sprang up, and hastened there. Bruno's mother was standing there alone, with a wild and agitated look; he was gone. The open window seemed to indicate that he had made his escape that way, although a descent from a height like that appeared almost incredible; but yet it was so. Bruno fled that night from his mother's roof, and never returned. We never heard tidings of him, and all inquiries were vain. He seemed as completely to be gone as if cut out from the number of the living. Seventeen years have passed since this unhappy time, and we have never discovered the least trace of him. We therefore believe his death probable.

"In the flight, Bruno took not the least thing with him, excepting the clothes he wore, and some papers. On his table lay a sheet of paper addressed to me, and written in evident haste.

"'I have met severity with scorn,' it said, 'might with might; and this has made me appear more criminal than I truly am. But before you, brother, who have never been severe or unreasonable towards me—before you, who, as I be-

lieve, love me, I will not appear worse than I am. Hear me, then, for this is the last time; this last theft (and I had sworn that it should be the last) was not entirely a theft. The day after tomorrow the money would have been restored; and of which, if you will convince yourself, speak with Mr. F. in W. The money was not for myself, but for the unfortunate—but what does it signify? My mother refused me a loan, and now I took only that which at one time would be mine. It was discovered, and she—she must bear the consequences of what has happened, and may yet happen. Farewell, forever. BRUNO.'

"*Ma chère mère* tore the paper out of my hand, and read the contents. 'He has stolen more than once, then,' said she, passionately; 'I have brought a thief into the world!' added she, rending the letter into a thousand pieces.

"From this moment she spoke not one word for three years. She shut herself in her own room, which was darkened; would endure neither light nor the sight of man; ate and drank but little; slept scarcely at all; spake with none; and no one, with the exception of Elsa, ventured to speak with her. When any of us, against her commands, were bold enough to approach her, she either fell into violent rage and showed the intruder but, or sat immovable, with her hands before her face, obstinately silent, and deaf to all our entreaties.

"Lagman Håk, in association with Pastor Rhen, managed her affairs, and in the hands of these honourable men they were safe; while a skilful overseer, acquainted with the place, farmed the estate under their inspection. But as *Ma chère mère's* hypochondriacal condition had already continued so long, and threatened a still longer continuance, I determined, after counselling with those friends, to call her own family together, and, in conjunction with them, to consider and determine what was best to be done both for the present and the future.

"This family meeting took place at Ramm, in October, 18—, three years after Bruno's flight. One day, as we sat together in the great hall, busily occupied by our council, the door was suddenly opened, and *Ma chère mère* entered; lofty, quiet, collected, and more respect-inspiring than ever. She addressed the assembly in her customary strong, solemn manner; saying that she knew the object of their meeting; justified it on account of her long sickness; but declared the congress to be now dissolved, because she felt herself again in perfect health, and again in a condition to regulate, as before, her family and her property. She returned thanks to all her friends, with an earnestness that affected all, for the patience which they had shown towards her, whom the Lord had so severely afflicted. Next she bade her relations all kindly welcome, prayed them to remain yet longer, and to be as cheerful and happy at Ramm as formerly.

"It would be difficult to describe the effect which this scene produced upon the assembly; admiration, esteem, and sympathy were the feelings of most; for myself, I felt sincere joy, for I really loved her.

"To gratify her wishes, the family remained there a few days; but all gaiety had vanished from Ramm. *Ma chère mère*, though strong and domineering as ever, went about like the shadow of what she had formerly been. Her complexion was changed; her hair become perfectly gray; her formerly handsome, animated coun-

tenance bore traces of the most painful sufferings; and she, who formerly was so cheerful, had become gloomy and thoughtful. She now wore always a dark-gray dress, and rejected all ornaments; at times, too, she had attacks of deep melancholy, and would sit silent for hours, and cover her face with her hands.

The first use she made of her re-established self-government was to remove from Ramm to Carlsfors. Shortly thereafter she purchased this estate; for, seeming to regard Bruno as dead, she never named him, and endured nothing which reminded her of him. The old servants were dismissed with pensions; for she wished to establish an entirely new household, and retained only Elsa of all her former domestics.

Time passed on, and by degrees the dark melancholy seemed to leave her, and now for the last several years she appears to have resumed her former life-enjoying existence; the only thing necessary is, that every one should carefully avoid touching the wounded part, which never can be perfectly healed in this world.

Bruno's flight made a great noise in the country, but *Ma chère mère* was so beloved and honoured by her domestics that the disgraceful occasion of his flight was never known publicly. Many uncertain reports were spread, but people all adopted the opinion that incompatibility of temper in mother and son had been the one sole cause of this violent separation.

Another mode of treatment, from childhood upward, would probably have made Bruno's fate different from what it was! but now—unfortunate Bruno! I must always lament and pity him." So concluded Lars Anders, with a tear and a deep sigh.

This history saddened indeed my spirit, but I must confess that it has given *Ma chère mère* a much higher interest in my eyes. I perceive now, in the depths of her being, the wounded and bleeding heart of a mother; and her misfortune was greater than her fault. I feel a closer affinity to her—I love her better.

22d.

I wish to send off this packet of letters, yet I must say, before it goes, that I am here now as a mock widow. Lars Anders has taken a journey with Peter to G—, to arrange some money matters. Lars Anders, during his twenty years' practice, has saved a pretty little property; which, by Peter's advice, he has now gone to invest in the great trading-house of G—. During this time, therefore, I rule and reign in solitary state over Rosenvik, the cabriolet, and the horse. Lars Anders desired me frequently to use these latter in conveying me to Carlsfors; and Peter asked me, in such a friendly manner, to look after his little Ebba, that I shall fulfil their wishes; although I would just now much rather remain at home, in my own loved home, and see my peas in blossom.

At the end of next week we are to receive a visiter at Rosenvik, the prospect of which makes me a little anxious. It is the young Baron Stellan S., who was an intimate friend of Lars Anders's youth. Lars Anders is this young man's guardian, and is attached to him, not only on his father's account, but on his own also. This young Stellan S. is gentleman of the bed chamber; handsome, rich, and full of talent. All this is not so very terrible, certainly; still, from much that I have heard of his elegance, his toilet, his style, I am not quite easy about entertaining so fine a gentleman in my small, but modestly-sup-

plied house. I cannot see, for my part, how he is to be amused; and I wish, most sincerely, that every friend of my husband's should find his house agreeable.

But all can go on as it may; only, how will it go on with my romance? No intrigues, no entanglements, consequently no disentanglements; I get only new persons. How am I to unravel all these? how keep the threads together without a perfect jumble? And now, again, two new characters—the brilliant Stellan S., and the mysterious Romilly; it makes me quite out of breath; how will it fare with my romance?

But, let it turn out as it may, I remain your
FRANZISKA.

A STRANGE LADY TO THE READER.

I hope, worthy reader, that this will reach thee in good health and good-humour. I hope, such being the case, that thou wilt excuse it if, now and then, the letter of a gentleman should slip in; among those of a young married lady, and that thou wilt not take it altogether amiss if an unmarried lady occasionally should take up her pen, in order to converse with thee. All this is merely that thou mayest have less trouble; and, in fact, I do not otherwise know how thou, dear reader, and the young wife, would ever be able to unravel all this about the Neighbours.

I remain, my reader, with the greatest esteem,
A STRANGE LADY.

BRUNO MANSFIELD TO ANTONIO DE R—.

Ramm, Midsummer evening, 18—.

Here I am again; here, where I was born, where I played and loved, as a boy and as a youth! Between then and now lies a sea, a sea full of—but, nevertheless, I am once more here. The oaks are as green as ever; the mountain peak is as high; the clouds pass over as they did hitherto. Feelings, thoughts, actions, are also clouds; they come, they go—space swallows them up—swallows?—no, something of them remains behind—I feel that too well!

I have ascended to the summit of the mountain, and stood where I stood as a boy; where I stood with panting breast, and saw the sea-waves lashed into foam by the winds, and the blue mountains raise themselves from the opposite shore; and whence my forebodings, my aspirations, and my longings, fled forth far, beyond. I stood by the selfsame fir-tree: it had outgrown me, although its roots strike into the rock; a heap of stones lay beneath—I was acquainted with all these. The boy had built a pyramid upon the mountain top, and had planted there his banner of freedom. The pyramid was thrown down, but the man stood there now, and thought of the work of the boy, and smiled—a bitter smile. I have wandered about in the wood, in the fields, and on the seashore; I have sought out many particular places, and woke many remembrances. The stormy appears to me calm, the guilty innocent. You may imagine how this is. I have lived my spring-time over again; I have enjoyed, I have wept; it was delight!

Now it is evening, and all around me is still; I also have a moment's rest. Like the calm leaf, which, lately blown by the wind, struck lightly on the casement, or the falcon which lately flew circling over the meadow—all are at rest. The mist now lies white and transparent over the green earth, and over reposing human beings. I hear the monotonous song of the moor-larks than which I know nothing sweeter. As a child.

I slept every summer evening to this song, with my face turned towards heaven, which was then rosy as now, and watched how the clouds became more golden and brighter the deeper the sun sunk—as it is with the action of a noble life, the nearer it draws to a close. Oh!

And then, as my eyes closed themselves, and living images began to shape themselves into dreams, then drew near—then every, every evening, one form stood by my bedside, and kind hands carefully drew about me the covering, which I had negligently thrown off; a warm, caressing breath then passed over my cheeks; I knew well who was near me, it was—my mother! Oh, how every fibre of my soul thrills and palpitates at this adored, yet terrible name—my mother! She was a handsome and noble lady, and I was proud to name myself her son. Sometimes I have suddenly thrown off the covering which she had so carefully laid over me, and with one spring fallen on her breast, embraced and kissed her, as I never kissed any beloved one—and she clasped me in her arms—that, that was love! Sometimes, too, I lay still, pretending to sleep, and then I have seen her fall on her knees by my couch, and pray—pray for me! How have those prayers been answered!

I have had this chamber repaired and furnished. I did not wish that it should too closely resemble what it was. I feared lest the apparition of a child, in the white dress of innocence, should present itself to me. The sleeping-room of my mother, however, I have left unchanged. I have not been into it; I cannot, and it is kept locked.

After this, will you acknowledge me again? Will you not lament over me as weak and pusillanimous? Hear me! I am rejoiced to feel myself again human; I am glad that no death-in-life quiet has petrified my heart. Still, as long as I live, no sentiment shall weaken or depress me, even though it came from the abyss—no joy, and no pain!

I know only too well that I never can be happy—peace is not for me; I can never forget; nevertheless, I can bear. But I will bear alone what I alone have merited. Many a tone can life awaken in my breast, but never that of complaint. I defy both the world and suffering! Beyond this, too, man can always cease to be, when he finds that miserable jugglery called “life” too heavy for him! Sometimes I think, “Perhaps it will mend; perhaps the yet bright day may efface the shadows of the past; perhaps the storm may be hushed, and these lamenting, mourning voices die away; time, rural occupation, custom, and perhaps domestic happiness—” You smile, Antonio. Alas! I smile also at such childish dreams. It may be; but, at all events, like a watcher, I look out for something—perhaps, after all, only for a dream.

Did you ever hear of a man who sought after his shadow? He had lost it, and it never prospered with him afterward in this world. I am that man. I seek my lost shadow. I seek after esteem; after consideration in that place from which, after having violated the law, I fled. I would win the civic wreath there, I would atone by beneficence for early misdeeds. Can it be? In the eye of the world, yes! but, with the judge in one’s own breast? One thing, however, I will obtain; for, without the obtaining of that, everything else is nothing. Should this be refused to me, I will once more leave the land of my childhood, go once more into the wide world, and be

—cursed! Why was Cain’s brow stamped by Heaven with eternal unrest! *He was cursed by his mother!* I know how Cain felt. I also was cursed by my mother, and am without rest in the world. And now, I desire, I will, that, upon that brow, whereon she laid so heavy a curse, she will again lay her hand, remove the curse, and place a blessing in its stead! Oh, then will its burning fire be cooled! Might I only bend my head to that breast which first gave me nourishment; might I see forgiveness in that stern glance; might I yet once more press those lips in love which once cursed me! Oh, I thirst, I burn, I languish after this happiness!

Do you know a high, holy, sweet, fearful name—a name which breaks forth in the struggle between life and death—a name which God himself, loving and suffering as a man, pronounced? This name I will address in my soul to her who has cast me off. Mother! O, mother! mother, my mother! wilt thou acknowledge thy guilty son? wilt thou forgive him? I scarcely dare to hope it! Yet she should do it—she was guiltless. Severity against severity—bitterness against bitterness—it could not succeed! But would she only be affectionate—would she only forgive! I pour out prayers at her feet!

You know my passion for music. I can satisfy it here. I have a fine-toned organ placed in one of the rooms. Every evening, at the approach of twilight, I sit and play there till deep in the night; the deeper the stillness, the dimmer the twilight, the higher peals forth the organ. It quiets me; it exalts and refreshes my soul. In its flood of sound I drown the recollections which become living in the bosom of night. Music is a glorious thing! it is an intoxication, an enchantment; a world in which to live, to combat, to repose; a sea of painful delight, incomprehensible and boundless as eternity.

In such moments, a vision sometimes presents itself; it appears to me as if there arose out of this tempestuous world, above this sea of sound, a—what must I call it? a hope, a heavenly spirit, a kind, reconciling genius, which, extracting from this stream of sound all that is most beautiful and most ethereal, weaves therefrom its own pure essence. The deeper the fugue descends, the brighter becomes this image, like stars in the dark night. Then sinks the storm, and my soul becomes tranquil; all dissonance, all pain is gone, and the heavenly image floats radiantly over the quiet lake; then it dims and vanishes. I cannot keep it; it arises with the ascending of the sound, and fades with its decline; neither can I call up at will this heavenly phantasma, although I have ever an indescribable longing to behold it. A reality so beautiful as this vision, life has never presented me with. I seldom go to rest before the sunbeams dance in the Helga Sea, and then my spirit is wearied with the warfare and enchantment of the night, and I can rest several hours.

Would that the song of my heart, the miseries of my soul, could reach the ear of my mother! But, before she hears my voice, messengers will approach, who, in friendly melodies, shall speak to her of the stranger; she shall hear him praised and celebrated, and then she will all the less shrink back from acknowledging him to be her son. But should she not do so—then, Antonio, you will soon again see, at the *Rouge et Noir*,

YOUR FRIEND.

CHAPTER V.

FRANKISKA WERNER TO MARIA W.—

Rosenwik, 25th June, evening.

"Ha! a stormy day, a truly unfortunate day! of which, however, the beginning was good. Yesterday I was invited to dinner, and to a Midsummer dance, at Carlsfors; but my headache prevented my going there. I let my servants go to the dance, excepting Sissa, who could be induced on no condition to leave me, and I myself passed the lovely Midsummer-day on the sofa. That was not very agreeable, yet it did me good to think on the many who were joyful on this day.

To-day I am quite well, and overflowing with spirit. As I felt, therefore, an inclination for a long walk, I took my work-basket, and set off for Carlsfors. The weather was rather dull, but still and pleasant; the country was full of its summer glory; the scythe had not yet gone over the flowery grass; butterflies flitted past with glittering wings; the birds sang, and I sang too; sang, as I walked over the beautiful earth, and felt myself happy to be one of these little beings which, inspired by a light and thankful breast, lift up their voices in praise of the Creator. To take such a walk as this is one of the greatest pleasures I know. I was as light and careless as a bird; I forgot all the weariness of the world; for air, flowers, green trees, blue waters—the whole life of nature, had become my life!

When I arrived at Carlsfors, I found *Ma chère mère* busy at her loath. She seemed delighted to see me, embraced me cordially, scolded me for my "stupid headache," and very soon we were in the midst of a lively and jocose conversation; during which time she went on with her work, and I admired her dexterity. It gives me real delight to feel that *Ma chère mère* and I become still more intimate. There is something between us that accords. I like her, and always feel cheerful and unconstrained with her; she is a prudent, true-hearted woman, even if she be too stern. She is one of those rare characters who always know what they are aiming at, and such have a beneficial influence on me. My quicksilver nature is calmed down and regulated by theirs. Two or three times during our conversation, she spoke to me with the pronoun *thou*,* which, in her mouth, has a something particularly graceful and sincere. Generally she uses *you* to all ladies, and Jane Maria she calls "daughter-in-law;" the little word *thou*, addressed to me, gave me great pleasure, as did also the present of a handsome turned box, which she had completed under my eyes.

Would it be possible for two people to be talking together in this neighbourhood, without mentioning the new resident at Ramm? I believe not. *Ma chère mère* also spoke of him to-day. This extraordinary man, it seems, has consecrated his residence in this country by a large donation for the erection of a school, which has long been wanted here. The old, estimable Mr. Dahl, who, notwithstanding his great age, is so active, and the Pastor D., in W., have undertaken the management of this business. *Ma chère mère* spoke of it; and it seemed to me that she also intended to take her part in this new erection, not only by providing the oak-timber necessary for the building, but by her good counsel also. A few words which she said on this

occasion, respecting education and general enlightenment, pleased me, on account of the clear views which they contained.

Thus were we two, as one may say, in the sunshine together, but towards noon clouds began to gather.

In her behaviour to me, Jane Maria was, as usual, most friendly and agreeable; but towards Ebba she assumed a chiding, admonitory, governess tone, which became her as little as it did good to Ebba. Poor Ebba! whatever might be amiss with her, she was in so bad a humour that not even a lover could have given it a better name. Negligent in dress and deportment, she leaned herself back, in a wayward mood, in her chair, and would eat nothing; made faces, threw her knife and fork away, grumbled right and left, and behaved most unbecomingly. Jane Maria blamed and moralized in vain; *Ma chère mère* said nothing, but I saw by certain glances that a storm was not far off. I was anxious, as I always am when I apprehend domestic strife, and did all that lay in my power to pacify all parties; but there was something strange in Jane Maria—it seemed as if she wished rather to unveil, than to conceal, Ebba's faults. Ebba began to sing to herself.

"People don't usually sing at table, Ebba," said Jane Maria, louder than there was any occasion.

Ma chère mère seemed to wish, as I did, to establish peace. She talked, therefore, with Ebba, in a joking tone; but Ebba only looked scornfully at her, by way of reply.

"Ebba, it is very unseemly to look at *Ma chère mère* in that way," said the carping voice of Jane Maria.

"Yet a cat may look at a king," remarked *Ma chère mère*, good-humouredly; then adding, but more seriously, that she thought she had a reasonable lady at table, and not a child. Ebba began to sing again.

"Don't sing, Ebba," said Jane Maria; "but listen to what *Ma chère mère* says."

"I don't know why I should do so," replied Ebba, with matchless effrontery.

"Because it is your duty," thundered out *Ma chère mère*, striking the table with her clinched fist; "and if you do not know this already, fetch me the hangman! but I will teach it to you!" said she, rising, with all her features expressive of great displeasure. The storm, after this, might have passed over, had not Ebba's incivility exceeded all bounds. I had often remarked, that, in small things, Jane Maria wished to have the preference over Ebba or me. She will always enter a room first; be first conducted to table; once I heard her say to the servant, "Remember that you must always present me before the Baroness Ebba." I willingly let this pass unnoticed; but Ebba took every opportunity to oppose Jane Maria's assumed claim of priority. A plate of milk, which now unfortunately stood between the two sisters-in-law, was the occasion of strife. Jane Maria, with a very well-bred air, endeavoured to appropriate this to herself, when Ebba snatched it with such violence that the milk was spilled over Jane Maria's muslin dress. All was over now! Jane Maria grew scarlet; *Ma chère mère* pushed back her chair, and, without saying a word to Ebba, took her by the arm, and led her out of the dining-room. I was deeply ashamed, and wished myself away. We all arose; Jane Maria went to change her dress, and we assembled in the anteroom, into which *Ma chère mère*

* A term used among equals only, as a demonstration of familiarity

also soon came, leading in Ebba, whose face was scarlet, and who with difficulty kept back her sobs. She led her to Jane Maria, and pronounced an apology, which Ebba repeated, word for word, after her; whereupon the two sisters-in-law embraced, but without cordiality. All this over, Ebba rushed to another room, threw herself on a sofa, and cried herself to sleep.

After coffee, *Ma chère mère* made the proposal to Jane Maria that she should play an overture, and then that they two should play a piece together. Jane Maria, who has no great opinion of *Ma chère mère's* musical talents, glanced at me, with a half-sarcastic expression, and then, in compliance with the request, played a *sonata* of Mozart's, which *Ma chère mère* selected, and in which she accompanied her on the violin. Jane Maria played with more ability than good-will. I was charmed, however, as I always am, by the music of Mozart; but Jane Maria will not willingly play any music but that of Hertz or Czerny, which, to my taste, is too fantastic and affected; and this time, her superior talent, *Ma chère mère's* zeal, and her being so practised in her "Mozart," as she calls him, occasioned this piece to go off so well that *Ma chère mère* herself cried "Bravo!"

After Jane Maria, it came my turn; but, partly in consequence of the "*grande sonate par Steibelt avec accompagnement de violon*," being wholly unknown to me, and partly in consequence of my being but a bungler on the piano in comparison of Jane Maria, I performed only indifferently. In vain did *Ma chère mère* beat the time, in vain made such flourishes on her violin that my *tympanum* was nearly rent to pieces—we were still both of us out of time. We began again—we repeated—she was impatient, and I was impatient—and we wound up with a perfect *charivari*; after which, *Ma chère mère* laid down her violin, and called me "a little sheep."

"When Jane Maria and I go together," said she, "it is very different—one can call that harmony."

The harmony, however, between *Ma chère mère* and Jane Maria was soon disturbed, in consequence of a question of housewifery. *Ma chère mère* uses one and a half measures of malt to two measures of beer, and to half a measure of ale. Jane Maria asserted that one third less malt, according to her method, would brew the same quantity of good beer and ale.

Ma chère mère said this was purely impossible, but Jane Maria abode by her assertion, and thus the strife lasted a long time; till, at last, Jane Maria let fall the remark, that *Ma chère mère* did not understand the right art of brewing. This was unlucky.

"Will the egg be wiser than the hen?" asked *Ma chère mère*, with bitterness. "I do not trouble myself about your new-fashioned art of brewing, and your wonderful discoveries—there may be art in them, but there is all the less wort. They who have tried know; and I have seen a few more years, and a few more brewings, than you have, daughter-in-law Jane Maria."

Jane Maria worked busily at the embroidery, grew very red, but was silent, with a countenance of superior wisdom. This was not pleasant; but, in the mean time, Ebba awoke, and came into the room like a bird after a shower. In order to amuse her, I proposed some cheerful game at cards, to which *Ma chère mère* assented gladly, and we sat ourselves all down to a round table. But, in the very beginning of the game, Jane Maria and Ebba fell into strife about some rule

of the game. Ebba appealed to me, and I gave my decision in her favour, with a merry remark on Jane Maria's opinion, which offended her; and, in return, she gave me a biting reply. Heaven knows how it was, that my thermometer rose in a moment! I was hot to the very roots of my hair, answered somewhat tartly, and for some moments we two quarrelled sharply. As soon, however, as I saw *Ma chère mère's* large eyes fixed upon me, I was ashamed, blushed, and endeavoured to make amends for my over-hastiness; but never, surely, was a game so little cheerful! Jane Maria sat there as if in a church, and received all *Ma chère mère's* observations, whether coarse or fine, with icy coldness.

I was truly rejoiced when they came to say that the cabriolet was at the door. As I took leave of Jane Maria, she withdrew from the kiss which I wished to press warmly on her lips, and only coldly and scarcely perceptibly touched my hand with the tips of her fingers. I was sorry to see how angry she was with me. *Ma chère mère* accompanied me to the hall, and said, "My dear Franziska, we have all been very wearisome to-day."

"Ah, yes!" answered I, so truly from the depths of my heart, that *Ma chère mère* was obliged to laugh, embraced me, and, looking keenly at me, said, "Yes; and you have been no better than the rest, you child."

"Nor you, mother, either," said I, merrily; but, somewhat shocked at my boldness, I added, warmly, "Forgive me!" and kissed her hand.

"Now, come again to-morrow," said she, laughing, and giving me a little slap on the cheek, "and we will try if we cannot do better; come, my child! I will send the *Norrkopings* carriage to fetch you and take you back—the horse knows one way just as well as the other."

This little parting scene lightened my heart. *Ma chère mère* possesses a stronger charm for me daily. But Jane Maria! How speeds it with our friendship and *La Commedia Divina*? But there are with every one bad days, when the temper is out of tune; and I myself was, as *Ma chère mère* says, no better than the rest.

To-morrow I hope all will be straight between Jane Maria and me.

26th, evening.

No! all is not straight again between Jane Maria and me. Extraordinary, how any one, on account of a trifle, can nourish resentment, more especially when the warmth was mutual!

Ma chère mère met me yesterday more cordially than common. Jane Maria, on the contrary, was constrained and unfriendly; she would not converse with me, and when I spoke to her scarcely answered me, which distressed me to the heart. I was also grieved for Ebba; she was pale and depressed, but not in ill-humour, and appeared as if she hardly understood either herself or life. She looked as if she needed a friend, and I determined to become such to her, according to my best ability. I remarked, also, that Jane Maria's moral lectures did no good; and that Jean Jacques's eternal exhortation to her, "to be rational, and go out and walk," only fixed the determination never to set foot out of doors, and to be as little rational as possible, the more firmly in her wilful brain.

I took the opportunity, during a moment when we were alone, to say to her, "Have you any desire to come to-morrow morning, quite early, to our house, to drink new milk? I have a cow, by name Audumbla, that gives the most delicious

milk in the world; and, beyond that, is so tame, that she will take bread out of your hand, if you will feed her. Have you any desire?"

"Ah, yes!" said Ebba, surprised, and opening wide her beautiful eyes, which instantly became brilliant.

"Now I shall come and fetch you," said I, "early to-morrow morning. But can you be up by six?"

"At five, or four," returned she, with enthusiasm.

"But you cannot walk so far," rejoined I; "it is nearly a quarter of a mile (Swedish) from Rosenvik—no, it is too far!"

"No, no, certainly not!" persisted she: "I can very well walk a mile, or more. I am strong—I can dance a whole night."

"Then I shall come and fetch you at six o'clock," I said, "and keep you with me the whole day. We will bake pancakes for ourselves for dinner, and in the evening I will bring you back in the cabriolet. The horse is so quiet, that you may drive him yourself."

"Heavens! how charming it will be!" exclaimed Ebba, quite enraptured.

"But," said I, "we must first have *Ma chère mère's* permission."

"Of course; I will run to her immediately, and speak about it;" and away she ran. The day to the country, the resolve never to go out, were forgotten, in the prospect of going with me, drinking milk, and driving the horse.

I rejoiced over my conquest, and that I should have Ebba for a whole day with me; for I felt persuaded that she possessed a good heart and understanding, if the right means were only used to call them forth. A few moments after this, I went to *Ma chère mère's* room, and found her, with Ebba seated on her knee, chattering to her, with all the merry freedom of a child, the while she was twisting the worthy old lady's cap into all odd bends and shapes. *Ma chère mère* laughed, and granted her request. There exists the very best understanding between them.

"So, my dear Franziska," said *Ma chère mère*, kindly, "I hear that to-morrow morning you will convey Ebba away, in order that she may drink sweet milk with your calves. I presume that you convey her away in an air-balloon, because you know that she cannot walk on dusty roads or green grass."

"How cheerful that would be!" exclaimed Ebba, clapping her hands, and hopping out of the room.

"She is not bad," observed *Ma chère mère*, "but she is an ill-trained child, and must yet be better taught. If it had been done earlier, it would have spared after-trouble. Franziska, if you have children, remember the words of the son of Sirach—'If you have children, chastise them.'"

I suggested that one should merely work by reason on children, and thus train them to be good men and thinking beings.

"Many ways may lead to Rome," returned she, "but the way of the rod leads them much sooner than the way of reason. Of course, you must operate on men by reason; but to be reasoning with children is to talk yourself hoarse, and get nothing for it. Teach the wolf the *paternoster*, and he still will be craving for the lamb. My mother-in-law Reinhold's children were to be brought up on this reasoning system, and were to turn out something wonderful. Nay, it was horrible—the whole brood was the plague of everybody in the house. One day there were vis-

itors at my brother-in-law's, and the children went about, making havoc, like little demons. Some one of the company remarked that something was 'black as a raven;' whereupon, one of the young Reinholds cried out, 'The raven is white.' 'No, my young one, the raven is black.' 'Nay, the raven is white, the raven is white!' screamed the child, angrily. 'The raven is black,' said the mother. 'The raven is white!' repeated the boy. Now, what should one do? Could one have had a raven directly at hand, to convince his reason? No, and so that young one would have the last word. I should like to have had him under my hands, and then he should soon have learned, and that with emphasis, that a raven is *not* white. No, no, Franziska; reason is a good thing, but it does no good with children. Those who will not obey father and mother, will yet obey the rod."

The story itself, and the zeal with which it was told, made me laugh heartily; but the thought how unfortunate *Ma chère mère's* doctrine had proved with regard to her only son, inspired a feeling of sadness; and, full of my own thoughts, I said, "It is possible that, for different dispositions, different modes of treatment are requisite."

"Perhaps so," returned she, and a dark cloud rested on her brow; but she soon dispersed it, and gayly resumed the conversation.

"In the mean time, Franziska," said she, "I am glad that you have taken that pretty little romp, Ebba, a little under your care. At her age, discreet words are seldom wasted; what is hidden in the snow turns up in the thaw."

The pretty romp was good-humoured and amiable all the day. Jane Maria, on the contrary, only the more sullen; at least towards Ebba and me. It seemed as if she thought we had made a league against her. I had a great desire to show her that it was not so, and that there was nothing I wished for more than that there should be again a good feeling between us; but she exhibited traits of character which almost displaced her from my heart, because they betrayed a want of goodness and true education. It was towards evening, and we were speaking of Bellini, with whose ballads Ebba was charmed. Jane Maria said he was too uniform, and that there was no life in his melodies.

"Oh," cried Ebba, "I must sing you one of his pieces, which is angelic. I learned it the last winter with Mr. B.; you must hear it!"

She sprang to the piano, and sang with much grace a charming little piece of this melodious master. I listened with great pleasure; when, exactly at the moment in which she executed with observant care a most expressive *movendo*, Jane Maria pushed back her chair with great noise, and went out of the room, both opening and shutting the door violently. Ebba turned red, and so did I, because Jane Maria's behaviour was painful, and was evidently intended to set Ebba down. I saw, by a glance, that *Ma chère mère* felt it as I did; and when Ebba left off, with tears in her eyes, she praised her greatly; more, indeed, than she would have done if Jane Maria had not shown such great unfriendliness.

Jane Maria is always spoken of as a lady of such superior education! "Ah," thought I, reviewing this scene, "how superficially is this beautiful and much-expressing phrase applied!" and I felt, after this, no longer any great desire to seek too much after a reconciliation with Jane Maria—I will let it take its time, and come when it will.

37th, evening.

This morning, at five o'clock, I set out on the way to Carlsfors, to fetch Ebba. The weather was as fine as I could wish, and at six o'clock I found Ebba at the appointed place, ready dressed, full of enthusiasm, and impatiently awaiting me. With the exception of the domestics, nobody was up but she, and so we set out. At first she leaped, and talked, and laughed, and sang; rejoicing in her life, like a bird; but no sooner had we reached a large, beautiful, and thick wood, which lies about midway between Carlsfors and Rosenvik, than she became suddenly quiet. It was, in fact, a situation calculated to excite pleasant and serious thoughts at the same time. It was perfectly still. Large dewdrops hung on the leaves of the trees; while the golden rays of the sun, breaking through the wood, produced, amid the rich foliage, innumerable beautiful effects of light and shade. The air was indescribably pure and delicious, and Ebba involuntarily went slower, while I walked silently beside her. A solemn mood was over me, and now and then I glanced at her. A soft paleness overspread her beautiful young face; a certain new perception might be read there: her eyes, which were filled with tears, looked slowly around, as if full of astonishment—she beheld a new world!

At that moment, a bird struck up wonderful, enchanting notes. One might have thought him endowed with a thinking soul.

"Oh, what is that?" asked Ebba, astonished, and standing still.

"It is a nightingale," I replied, rejoicing no little in the beloved, but so rarely-heard song.

Ebba listened long, looked long, as if listening to everything around her. It seemed as if her spiritual ear had now, for the first time, awoke to the high song of life.

"Gracious Heaven!" whispered she, "how solemn it is, how wonderful, how beautiful!"

I repeated, half aloud, the words of Tegner,

"Ah! if so much of beauty pour itself
Into each vein of life, and of creation,
How beautiful must the great Fountain be,
The Bright, the Eternal!"

Ebba threw herself, weeping, into my arms, and I clasped her to me with sisterly affection.

"Ah, Franziska," said she, "I know not how I feel! I am happy, and yet I must weep! It is so beautiful around me! Tell me, what is this like."

"Life," I replied.

"Life?" repeated she, astonished; "but life has so many unaccordant, so many adverse scenes."

"Yes," said I, "but what we see at this moment resembles the truth of life—the inward reality of life—which is serious, yet, at the same time, joyful."

"I do not perfectly understand you," said Ebba, laying her hand on my forehead; "but I think I half guess—thoughts pass through my mind, but I cannot arrange them."

"In time, dear Ebba," I replied, "you will understand them better."

"And if I understand that seriousness of life," said she, "of which you speak, should I then be joyful, and laugh, as now?"

"Oh, yes," I answered: "then, for the first time, Ebba, would you be truly joyful and happy; then you would not, as now, have so much ill-humour, and so many weary moments."

"I will learn the seriousness of life," said she, cheerfully; "but, then, who will teach me? Jane Maria cannot do it; you could, but then I shall so soon leave you."

"Do you know, Ebba," asked I, "whom this wood-scene resembles?"

"Whom?"

"Your husband," I replied.

Ebba looked at me with sparkling eyes, and said, "I believe you are right."

"Yes," I said, "his spirit is both serious and bright; and, if you will learn the seriousness of life, and its beauty also, live for him, Ebba. Oh, Ebba! be like the nightingale to his domestic life! be to him like the sunbeams between the trees; unite yourself inwardly to him; be guided by him; make him happy; and then you will understand what is the best happiness of life, and will acquire a worth in your own eyes, with God and with man."

Ebba was pale, kissed my hand, and wept. But, ah! how lovely were those tears upon those cheeks, announcing, as they did, the morning-dawn of womanhood in a hitherto childish being!

I left Ebba to her own thoughts, and we went on our way, silently, towards Rosenvik; nor was it until we arrived there that she aroused herself from her reflections; and then the foaming milk, which we took, in glasses, out of the milk-pail, seemed to us a drink worthy of the gods. Ebba could not conceive that Audumbla's could be like common milk, and I did not entirely undeceive her.

My intercourse with Ebba during the remainder of the day strengthened my good opinion of her; many good natural qualities lie hidden, which, if properly developed and cultivated, would make her a good and estimable being. There is, it is true, much in her that is childish, but I have every reason to pardon that, in her seventeenth year, which I, at seven-and-twenty—

Ebba, at one time, fell into deep; and, as it seemed to me, sorrowful thought; I asked her, therefore, tenderly, what pressed upon her mind.

"Oh," sighed she, "if he only were not called Peter!"

I could not help laughing aloud; but poor Ebba sorrowfully continued, "Jane Maria, also, thinks Peter a dreadful name; and that Jean Jacques sounds so well! Oh, how disagreeable it is, that he should have been called Peter!"

I tried to comfort her, and mentioned to her the various great men who had borne the same name. She thought but little of the Apostle Peter, and just as little of the Czar Peter. The Herr Peder, of the popular song, made the name somewhat more poetical; and, at last, she was almost inclined to be reconciled to the name, when I showed her that Pedro and Peter were the same, and that a lately-deceased emperor, nearly connected with our own royal house, bore that same name. She proposed to call her husband Pedro. I proposed, also, various abbreviations; and, after all, we concluded by laughing heartily at the whole affair; so that, in the end, Ebba was as much satisfied with the name of Peter as I with the much less poetical one of Lars Anders.

We ended the day with blowing bubbles in the open air, with as much enthusiasm and delight as if we were still little children; and then I took her home in the cabriolet, giving up to her the reins, sometimes, to her no small delight.

I was quite curious to see whether Jane Maria continued still in her state of discontent. It seemed to me impossible that she could; but, at the first greeting, I perceived that it was so. I was quite distressed at this, and nearly lost all my hope of a friendly understanding between us, because I cannot love any one who is not reason-

able and kind. Conduct like this, so properly called by the ugly name of sulking, turns life into a gloomy autumn-day. A thousand times better is the fiery temper of *Ma chère mère*. She speaks out violently; but, when she has "said her say" it is all over; she once more is perfectly kind, nor wears an angry face any longer. Nevertheless, I am glad that I have not daily to crouch before her sceptre; and, the more I compare Lars Anders with other people, the more does he seem like an angel of peace.

Ma chère mère was very much occupied this evening with the new neighbour at Ramm; partly because she had heard so many reports of him greatly to his advantage, and partly because he had shown her a great civility. Some time ago, she mentioned, in company, that she longed for a roast of roebuck, and that it was her wish to have a pair of roes, in order that she might introduce the breed into the park. Before her misfortunes, *Ma chère mère* was a great lover of the chase, and had brought down many a swift-footed roebuck. Her new neighbour at Ramm, having heard of this, had now, therefore, sent her a delicious roast—a fat young roe, which he had shot; together with two live specimens of these creatures, which they had been fortunate enough to take in snares.

This present was accompanied by a very polite French note from the new neighbour, which said, that, having accidentally heard of the wish of the former proprietor of Ramm, he now esteemed himself fortunate in being able to accomplish it, especially as he should himself soon become the proprietor of the estate, and then his highest wish would be to stand in the most friendly connexion with so estimable a neighbour; in pledge and proof of which, he prayed her to receive what he had sent. The letter was signed "Antonio de Romilly."

Ma chère mère was charmed with the French note, with the roebucks, and, above all, with the politeness of the new neighbour.

"See!" said she, "one can call that *savoir vivre*. Yes, these, Southlanders have not their equals anywhere. We must see the man. I will invite him to my first great dinner-party; yes, even if he does not pay me a visit before; such politeness as this, indeed, is worth seven visits. But now I must answer this note, and that in French too. Franziska shall read the note, after I have finished it; but, thank God! I have learned French grammatically, and used to both write and to speak it as well as most people. Of late years I have forgotten something of it, but I shall be very glad to bring my French into use again with this polite Monsieur de Romilly; it will be very pleasant to make his intimate acquaintance."

It must be very agreeable to make the acquaintance of this man—I say, with *Ma chère mère*; because a person of whom everybody speaks, and whom nobody sees, who displays beneficence and politeness, yet whom nobody knows, is, incontestably, an extraordinary and interesting phenomenon.

Ma chère mère laboured long at her French letter, and, as I read it over when it was completed, I had difficulty to avoid smiling; it was so ornamental and old-fashioned. In part, too, it was so like herself, written in so thoroughly antiquated a style, yet expressing so clearly and forcibly her meaning. I considered it, therefore, impossible, and equally unnecessary, to alter it; and "*Monsieur, et très honoré voisin,*" "*politesse magnanime,*" "*présent gentil et courtois,*" and such-like extraordinary words, remained as they were written. I

said, moreover, that the note was good, much to the satisfaction of the writer, who had watched me with some disquiet, and who, having my approval, was contented with the note, with herself, and with me.

30th.

Ah! I breathe again! The air is, at last, clear between Jane Maria and me, and the south wind which dispersed the mist is called—flattery.

The day before yesterday, Lars Anders came home, satisfied with himself, his journey, his business, and, above all, with his little wife, who, on her part, was not dissatisfied with him. Yesterday evening was the Sunday's dance at Carlsfors, and we were invited by *Ma chère mère* to be present, because she wished the *skat* to be drunk to the two last-arrived married couples, and to make a speech to the people on the occasion; all which would have been done on the Midsummer day, had not Lars Anders and Peter been absent.

Ma chère mère played on the violin, for the dancing, nearly the whole evening. Ebba danced, from hearty love for the amusement, and so did I. Jane Maria and her husband, who were out visiting, came in only late, as spectators. I poured forth a stream of admiration of her toilet, which truly was most tasteful, and so the gray cloud which had hung between us dispersed itself, and Jane Maria became, to my indescribable refreshment, friendly as ever. But, with the *Commedia Divina* of our friendship, all is, alas! over, and that grieves me. I wish, among my many neighbours and acquaintances, to find a friend. Ebba is too much of a child; Miss Hausgiebel too much of a bird; and *Ma chère mère*—is *Ma chère mère*. It would, after all, be but a poor pleasure to have many neighbours, but no friends.

After the dance, *Ma chère mère* ordered the punch-bowl to be brought in, and *skat* to be drunk to the newly married. She also made a speech, thickly interlarded with proverbs, which, however, on the whole, did not seem to be one of her most successful efforts.

My husband takes my letter with him to the city; I close it, therefore, in haste. I should be astonished if anybody wrote as long letters as I do. But for this reason you are my Maria, and I am your

FRANZISKA.

CHAPTER VI.

Rosenvik, 3d July.

As a bee goes from flower to flower, so go I from neighbour to neighbour, and collect honey for my hive. The harvest has been rich to-day; and no wonder, since I was with the flower of the valley—the good and amiable Serena.

Lars Anders reminded me, this morning, that we promised the old Dahls to spend a day with them. He therefore proposed that I should accompany him to the city this morning; said he would leave me at the Dahls, and come in himself there to dinner, after he had visited his patients. I was frightened at this project at first, and made many objections to it; as how I could not go out on that day of all others, because it was not convenient to me; neither did it seem the most becoming thing in the world for strange people to make incursions in this way into other people's houses, and there establish themselves for a whole day, while, all the time, they, the unbidden guests, are wished, perhaps, at Nova Zembla. But against all this, Lars Anders, in his laconic way, was remarkably eloquent, and over-

turned all my objections; add to which, a secret thought of Serena and the kingdom of heaven captivated me. I dressed myself, therefore, simply, but prettily, according to my husband's taste, and away rolled the cabriolet containing Bear and his little wife.

I was properly delivered up at time and place appointed, Bear taking it into his obstinate head not to go in with me, but to let me go in and speak for myself. In vain I represented to him that I was not so fortunate as a physic-bottle, which, at the very least, takes with it a paper label, whereon is indicated for what purpose it may serve, and that everybody may know what is to be done with it. He said that I had nothing to do but to greet them from him in a proper way, and that this and my countenance together would do what was needful.

And so we parted, quarrelling.

As I went up the steps, it appeared to me that I could be of no more value than a person who comes with the intention of borrowing money; but scarcely had I entered the door, than I was ready to believe that I must be either "the cream to the coffee," or some much-longed-for present, so was I rejoiced over, and welcomed, and embraced; all which I felt, in my grateful soul, to be on account of my husband. I arrived just as they sat down to coffee; ate, drank, talked—and felt myself, in short, like a child of the house.

And now I will send you in prose a description of the family, which I have already drawn in poetical colours. They bear the same relation to each other as an every-day and a holy-day—but both are of the kingdom of heaven. I speak not now of my own impressions, but from information which I have had from Miss Hellevi Hausgieble and *Ma chère mère*.

THE HOME.

For above half a century this ancient couple have inhabited the same house and the same rooms. There were they married, and there they will celebrate their golden nuptials, in the course of the next winter. The rooms are unchanged, the furniture the same as for fifty years; yet everything is clean, comfortable, and friendly as in a one-year-old dwelling, but much more simple than the houses of our times. I know not what spirit of peace and grace it is which blows upon me in this house! Ah! in this house fifty years have passed as a beautiful day; here a virtuous couple have lived, loved, and worked together. Many a pure joy has blossomed here; and when sorrow came, it was not bitter—for the fear of God, and love, illuminated the dark clouds. Hence emanated many a noble deed, and many a beneficent influence. The happy children grew up; they gathered strength from the example of their parents, went out into the world, built for themselves houses, and were good and fortunate. Often do they return, with love and joy, to the parental home, to bless and to be blessed. Ah, my Maria! I feel that I am again sliding into the poetical veir; but what would you have? These are pictures of every-day life, which, let me turn them as I will, always stand in a poetical light; yet I will endeavour to keep more to the earth. Thus, then—the children, three sons and four daughters, come once a year, with their children, to visit their beloved parents, and extend new life to the home of their childhood—that home which is still to them as full of love and goodness as ever, only that it has become stiller and more peaceful; because it is evening there,

and the shadows of the grave begin to ascend round the revered parents.

And now let us glance at

THE FATHER.

A long life of probity, industry, and beneficence has impressed itself upon his expansive forehead, and upon his open, benevolent carriage. His figure is yet firm, and his gait steady. The lofty crown is bald, but a garland of silver-white locks surrounds the venerable head. No one in the city sees this head without bowing in friendly and reverential greeting. The whole country, as well as the city, loves him as their benefactor, and venerates him as their patriarch. He has created his own fortune, but sacrificed much for the public good; and, notwithstanding much adversity and loss, never let his spirit sink. In mind and conversation, he is still cheerful, and full of jest and sprightliness; but, for several years, his sight has failed him greatly; and the gout, which makes its appearance at times, troubles his temper. Ah, the prose of life! But an angel moves around the couch to which suffering may confine him; his feet are moved and enwrapped by soft white hands; the sick-chamber and the countenance of the old man grow bright before Serena!

We shall not come out of the poetry of the house while she abides there.

THE MOTHER.

An aged countenance and a bowed form, and you see an old woman; but show her something beautiful, speak to her of something amiable, and her mien, her smile, beams from the eternal youth which dwells immortally in her sensitive spirit, and then will you involuntarily exclaim, "What beautiful age!" If you sit near her, and look into her mild, pious eyes, you feel as if you could open your whole soul, and believe in every word she speaks, as in the Gospel. She has lived through much, and experienced much; yet she says that she will live in order to learn. Truly, we must learn from her. Her tone and her demeanour betoken true breeding and much knowledge of life. She alone has educated her children, and still she thinks and acts both for children and children's children, and still bears home and family cares on her own shoulders, although she now supports herself on Serena.

Since the death of her youngest daughter, she is become somewhat melancholy. This is not observable in her words, but in her frequent sighs. Like her husband, she is universally revered and beloved; and all agree in this, that a more perfect union than exists between this couple cannot be imagined.

Will you see in one little circumstance a miniature picture of the whole? Every evening the old man himself roasts two apples—every evening, when they are done, he gives one of them to "his handsome old wife," as he calls her. Thus for fifty years have they divided everything with each other.

The good old lady called me Franziska immediately, and addressed me with the pronoun *thou*, in a kind, grandmotherly tone, that did my heart good. I can like *Ma chère mère*, but I could love this dear old lady.

And now to the third person—the peculiar beauty and ornament to the house—

SERENA.

Her mother was called Benjaminia, and was, like the Benjamin of the Bible, the youngest and

best-beloved child of her parents. When scarcely eighteen, she married a young man who both possessed and deserved her whole love. It was a marriage beautiful as a spring day, but too soon cut short! The daughter, who after two years was the fruit of this marriage, was named Serena; and with her birth the mother's days on earth were ended. She blessed her daughter, and died. The father followed her in a few months—they could not longer be separated. The cradle of the little orphan was taken to the house of the grandparents; she soon was their comfort, and soon also their loveliest joy; but not only was the little Serena beloved by them, but by all their friends and acquaintance also.

The beautiful life of her parents and their early death had thrown over the motherless child the mourning weeds which draw the sympathetic tears of good men. Her childhood, however, was one of suffering, from a weakness in the hip, which kept her long confined, and cut her off from the pastimes of children, paled her cheeks, and gave to her lips that quiet smile of sadness which yet dwells there at times with all the power of a mysterious enchantment. All this, united to her much patience, and the intrinsic amiability of her whole being, captivated all hearts, and won for her the sympathy of all.

For a long time, it seemed as if the languishing angel would extend her wings, and follow the ascension of her parents; but it was not to be so. Watchful and true affection kept her still on earth. Like a rose on a sunny grave, like a young vine which clings with its tender twigs around firm and ancient stems, so Serena grew up, gladdened by the loving looks of friends, and tenderly sustained and led by those who had been the support of her parents. She became healthy, smiled, played, developed herself, and ripened, by little and little, to a beautiful, harmonious being.

She learned everything with a degree of difficulty, but she retained what she learned in a faithful memory. Always timid to begin, she never relinquished what she had once begun till it was completed, and well completed. Thus her teachers, who were in the beginning impatient, were in the end always satisfied. Serena was not richly endowed, but then she did all so well—she was so good, so true, so affectionate!

So she grew up, and became the flower of the valley. The earnestness of her spirit, and the clearness of her understanding, made her happy; happy with the joy of angels—the pure, animating, self-communicating joy.

"Look at Serena!" said every mother in the country to her daughter. The daughters looked at her, and endeavoured to resemble her whom they could not help loving.

But the prose in this picture, the earthly feature in this angel-image! Ah, also, this must be told! Serena is lame in her hip. The word frightens me, and I am ready to contradict what I have just said; and if you imagine Serena to be a limping, crooked figure, I do contradict it with all my might. You must imagine a graceful, perfectly lovely figure, which, when walking, slightly bends forward, without being disfigured thereby. Her lameness gives a slow, undulating motion, which appears rather like an exception to the rule than as a real defect. Is it the remembrance of a suffering, or the tone of her whole being, which so completely conceals this fault of nature? Whatever it may be, it inspires no other feeling in those who see her but an involuntary desire to support her.

Serena's appearance in other respects you must imagine from my former description. The innocence of her brow, the clear, child-like gleam of her blue eyes, charmed me as much now as when I saw her first; and I thought her still lovelier in her simple every-day dress than in her festival garb.

I must not forget Gold-gelb, who flew twittering around his lovely mistress. Madame Dahl told me, when I inquired how the little creature became so tame, that, during the severe winter of two years ago, Serena found the little creature lying half dead on the house floor. She took him up, cherished, and fed him. The sparrow recovered, and since then has been as attached to Serena as if he understood how to be grateful. It is true that Serena tenderly cares for him, as she does for everything that is under her charge. He goes into his cage to eat, but, excepting at night, is never confined.

And now about myself—since I must not forget myself. Madame Dahl begged me to sing (how agreeable to be possessed of some little talent or other!). I obeyed; was applauded and thanked with warmth.

"And now Serena must sing some little thing," said old Mr. Dahl, quite gayly.

"Oh, grandfather!" said she, blushing, "how it will sound after what we have just heard!"

"My dear child," replied the old man, smiling, "do not let Madame Werner hear that you are vain."

"No," returned Serena, joyfully, "and on that very account she shall hear my weak, hoarse voice."

She sat down immediately to the instrument, and sang a sweet little gem-like song of Lindeblad's. Her voice was not hoarse, but weak, and evidently not much practised; but she sang with so much soul, with so much thought, in word and tone, as gave me intrinsic delight.

"Yes," said the old gentleman, evidently charmed to the soul, "I would much rather hear that than all our Catalinis, Maras, Dulcamaras, or whatever they may be called, who are more of instruments than singers. This singing, at least, I comprehend with my heart as well as my understanding. If Serena had only had opportunity to learn, then—" and the old man looked very significantly.

"Are there, then, not teachers of singing in the city?" I asked.

"None, with the exception of old E., who sings so terribly false. Several of our relations wished to take Serena with them to Stockholm, that there she might cultivate her talent, but she would not leave us. She knows very well that, without her, we should not find ourselves so well off; and therefore her voice must remain new sticking in her throat, and, moreover, will get quite hoarse, because she reads so much Latin." With these words, he extended his hand to her, she embraced him, and both laughed. "If you are not tired of singing," continued he, "come, my good child, and read me some Latin out of this new book of Victor—you know what I always forget what the fellow is called—will you, my child?"

"With all my heart," answered Serena; and the two went out together.

"Does Miss Lövén read Latin?" inquired I, with astonishment, of Madame Dahl.

"Ah, it's all nonsense!" said the good old lady, smiling. "Since my old eyes have become so weak, Serena has read to him. His fa-

vourite reading is novels and romances. The last, he says, preserve his soul young. Now, when there occurred passages in these books which Serena thought not quite proper to read aloud, she was accustomed to skip them; but when it happened, as sometimes would be the case, that this could not well be done, she said, 'There is some Latin here!' My husband, who is sometimes half asleep during the reading, let the excuse pass for some time, although he thought it rather odd that Latin should so often occur.

"It is an extraordinary way of writing," said he, sometimes, 'that our modern authors have got; it is a cursed pedantry,' etc., till he got quite excited about it. One day, however, it happened that Latin came so very often in the book she was reading, that my old man, astonished in the highest degree, began to search the matter to the bottom; and when Serena had finished reading, and left him to himself, he put on his double spectacles and began to study this imagined Latin. He soon, therefore, discovered how it was; and now this Latin is a standing joke of his against Serena, whom, however, he persuaded by little and little to be less exact regarding the Latin."

We continued for a long time to talk about Serena, and the good old lady listened with pleasure to all that I said respecting her favourite. At length, said she, with a sigh, "And yet she is much less lovely now than she was. It seems to me that for the last year, she has become thinner, and she coughs at times; I fear that the confined life she leads with us is injurious to her. Dr. Werner has ordered country air and exercise, and many of our acquaintance have begged Serena to come to their country-seats; but she will not leave us, and we ourselves do not know properly what we should do without her, especially my husband, who will not hear of her leaving us. We have, therefore, thought of renting, next summer, a little country-house in the neighbourhood of the city, where we can have her with us, and yet benefit her health. In the mean time, she must, as often as possible, ride on horseback in the country, and I and my husband will accompany her in the carriage. We think of beginning this regimen next week, when Serena will have a nice little safe horse."

Here I interrupted her to inquire if it would not be possible that Serena should take her rides to Rosenvik, and should now and then remain with me the whole day! I would take the greatest care of her; we would be out together in the fresh air, we would drink new milk, we would sing together; and God knows what I did not say besides, for a flood of eloquence came over me.

The old lady thanked me, looked half pleased and half troubled; did not know what could be done, and said, at last, with a sigh, "We'll see what my husband says; we will speak with him."

And I will speak with my husband too, thought I, and get him on my side, and then who can withstand us! I was possessed with the greatest possible zeal to accomplish the affair. My husband came, and the moment he entered the door, I surprised him with my project.

"My sweet Bear! if you love me you must take my side, and speak for me and with me, that Serena come to spend a whole day with me at Rosenvik. You see, she will ride out for exercise; that you yourself have prescribed, an-

gel! Prescribe now, also, that she rides to us; say that it is necessary to her health. I will take care of her, and I will sing with her. Say this to the old people, talk with them, manage that it shall be done! You will do it, Bear, dearest!"

"Heaven help us! What a *flux de bouche*! Could one only draw breath! *Uf!* Now I see that you are pretty much at home here!"

"Entirely through my own merits, and nobody's else," said I.

The whole family received and welcomed my husband as a very dear and much-esteemed friend. He acts on these occasions in a pacha-like manner, and receives all friendliness and politeness as no more than his just tribute, and that may very well be correct.

As I have placed myself to-day on the promiscuous side of things, I kept at dinner-time a watchful eye upon the part of the domestic arrangement; for, without completeness in this respect in the north, at least all the poetry of life evaporates like the odour of Champagne. But I only discovered that I might learn much from Serena both as regarded cooking and arrangement. For the last several years she has regulated, and that excellently, the domestic arrangements. The sweet girl was an observant and graceful hostess to the whole table: while she, seated by her half-blind grandfather, seemed to devote her constant care to him.

After dinner, I soon began to introduce my project, which Lars Anders seconded, both with reason and force, was carried through successfully. At first the old gentleman looked thoughtful; but when I mentioned how Serena and I could practice singing together, he assented joyfully, shook my hand, and said it was excellent! When Serena heard the consent of her grand-parents given thus cordially, she showed what pleasure the idea afforded her also, embraced me, and said, with a tear in her eye, that I was quite too good to take so much interest in her voice.

I was pleased to my heart's core, and, being light in spirit, everything else was pleasant. The evening passed in agreeable conversation. Mr. Dahl spoke warmly of Mr. De Romilly's large donation, and of all the advantages the country would derive from school instruction, of the kind, and to the extent, which they now could adopt. The old, yet still vigorous man, was already in full activity, as director of the scheme. In this, his seventieth year, he is as ardent for the well-being of his kind as any enthusiast of twenty; and when one sees an instance of this kind, one has a desire to live long.

Serena has the power of being unwearingly entertaining. One cannot exactly say that her conversation is in any way distinguished, but it expresses a certain high tone of spirit which I call womanliness. I wish that she were my sister. Oh, if I could only possess her for my friend! It is true, that, compared with me, she is very young, and she does not exactly look upon life as I do; still she attracts me irresistibly, as it were, into her angel-world.

On our way home, Lars Anders and I spoke almost entirely of her. He was much more talkative on this subject than he is accustomed to be on most. "She is," said he, "a most estimable young lady. It is quite affecting to see how altogether she quite sacrifices herself for her old grand-parents; how self-forgetting she is! As physician in the family, I have had good op-

portunity of observing this. I know, quite certainly, that she has declined four good offers of marriage; people say more; always under the plea that she could not sufficiently love the admirer; but the certain reason was, that she could not leave the old people. She lets it be very well seen that she will not separate from them. Two years ago, a young, amiable Englishman, who was most desperately in love with her, proposed, but he was refused like the rest, although every one believed that Serena was not indifferent to him. He did not conceal his despair, fell into dissipation to divert his mind, and, a year afterward, died unfortunately. People ascribed this to the desperate state of his affairs; but, certainly, the unfavourable termination of his love-affair was the chief occasion of his misfortunes. Be that as it may, this is certain, that this circumstance made a strong impression on Serena, and ever since her mood has been less cheerful, and her cheek has become paler; but her calmness and her amiability, nevertheless, remain."

"May she gather joy and roses at Rosenvik!" exclaimed I.

5th July.

I have seen him! I have seen him! The woodman; the spy; Don Miguel; the polite one; the beneficent one; the mystery; in one word, the new neighbour at Ramm, Mr. De Romilly! I have seen him! and, if I were to live fifty years, and never to see him again, I should never forget him.

Is he, then, so handsome? I do not know. Or so ugly? I do not know. Is he so amiable? I don't know that. Or so unamiable? I don't know. Whom is he like? I don't know. Is he a hero for romance? That I can't tell. What is he? Neither do I know that. Such were the questions put to me by Miss Hausgiebel to-day, and such were my answers to her.

Now listen, my Maria.

Yesterday afternoon I was agreeably surprised by a visit from the brothers and sisters-in-law. Already had they made all possible voyages of discovery in my little world, and we were beginning to get quite merry and comfortable together, and to turn over the project of taking supper all together on Svanö, when suddenly the opening door was darkened by a tall, strong, and gloomy figure. At the first glance, I recognised the stranger we had seen in the wood, and was quite oppressed. I know not why, but it was as if a voice exclaimed to me, "Samiel! Samiel!"

Lars Anders met the new-comer with his accustomed cordial frankness, and bade him welcome. The stranger mentioned his name in a voice that seemed to me dissonant. My husband introduced him to me, and then all took their seats.

There is no one, in all the world, who asks fewer questions than Lars Anders, and strangers, in particular, might remain, for him, eternal mysteries. Not so Jean Jacques; he questions people without ceremony, although in an easy manner, and not so as to offend any one who is not too sensitive. In a few minutes, he had inquired from Mr. De Romilly how long he had been in Sweden—how long he thought of remaining here—how it pleased him, and so on. One must confess that his zeal in questioning did not enliven the stranger much; for I never heard any one return such short, indefinite, and dry answers. Notwithstanding all this, I was infected by Jean Jacques, and even inquired, while the others were speaking French, whether

Swedish appeared to him a harsh language; when, to my great astonishment, he answered in Swedish, with a foreign accent, yet in an altogether altered and melodious voice. "On the contrary, it appears to me very sweet, particularly in the mouth of a lady."

"You speak Swedish," said I, astonished.

"Some years ago," answered he, in the same mild voice, "I passed a winter in Sweden, and learned your beautiful language then."

The conversation now continued in Swedish; but Mr. De Romilly took only little part in it, although Jean Jacques did his utmost to draw him out, by touching on subjects which he imagined must be familiar to the stranger. Especially did he relate a deal respecting Portugal, its trade and colonies. From this subject, the conversation turned on the various races of mankind, a subject which Jean Jacques handled both interestingly and well; although it appeared to me that he was unjust towards the race which he called Ethiopic, inasmuch as he placed them in the same grade with animals; declaring, farther, that the negro was totally incapable of any higher degree of culture, which assertion Peter combated in part. From this, the slave-trade came to be spoken of. To my amazement, Jean Jacques justified it; and asserted that the negro possessed no value at all, except as the slave of the cultivated European, and was only capable of a measured degree of happiness.

Peter opposed this to the utmost, and on sound principles; while Jean Jacques quoted passages from Tarlton and Gascoin in support of his proposition, and Peter answered, triumphantly, with assertions from Wilberforce and Canning. All this time the stranger spoke not a word, although he evidently listened to the conversation with the most lively interest; while, at one time, a scornful, bitter smile would curl upon his lip, at another, an extraordinary flash would seem to light up his dark eyes. I could not remove my gaze from him; and although it was impossible to say to which side his opinions inclined, yet it appeared to me that he listened with the greatest satisfaction to Jean Jacques, especially while, in a long and zealous speech, he was endeavouring to place the negro in the lowest point of view, more particularly as regarded his intellectual being; asserting that Nature had, herself, planted an impassable barrier against his advances.

"Do with the negro what you will," said he, in conclusion; "heap upon him education and enlightenment, still his understanding will ever remain slavishly subject to that of the European; develop all his faculties, and he will still remain a machine in the hands of the European, whom he is designed by Nature to serve."

I saw this while, by Lars Anders's countenance, that all this did not much please him; and when Jean Jacques had finished, he said, with emphasis, "I know not whether the negro be capable of a higher intellectual development, neither do I know whether, after all, that intellect be the most important part of the human conformation; but this I do know, that the negro is a man, and, as a man, he is my brother."

"Brother!" repeated De Romilly, in a voice which startled me, so extraordinarily wild, and almost threatening.

"Yes," replied Lars Anders, with warmth, "I say brother; and whoever trades in his life, or his freedom, is a monster—is worse than a murderer."

"A murderer!" repeated the stranger, with a spasmodic contraction of the eyebrows, and in such a gloomy voice as involuntarily turned all eyes upon him. The expression of his countenance changed again, and he remarked, quietly, but earnestly, to Lars Anders, "*Monsieur, je pense entièrement comme vous.*"

He said no more, but sat as if his thoughts were sunk into himself, nor appeared to pay the slightest attention to the after-conversation, which Jean Jacques had led, with his usual ease, to subjects quite different.

After a while, I spoke again of our little excursion to Svano, and proposed to the whole company that they should immediately adjourn there, while I would follow them a little later, with the collation.

Mr. De Romilly, who did not seem to have much taste for so pastoral a meal, excused himself, and shortly after took his leave. We saw him, as we were about to set off for Svano, mount his beautiful black horse, and, with a polite parting salutation, he vanished under the trees.

I felt myself relieved when he was gone; and yet, involuntarily, I looked after him with a desire to obtain yet one more glance of that dark and handsome face.

We proceeded to Svano, and had a merry evening there. The green grass seemed to neutralize all pretensions and claims to precedence; Jane Maria and Ebba drank milk out of the same glass!

But, as yet, I can speak of nothing but the stranger, and for the whole evening could think of nothing else. Jane Maria bantered me on my absence of mind. I cannot, in short, even get his image from my thoughts. I have now seen, *en face*, this much-talked-of neighbour; and yet, I know not what I should say of him. The first impression which he makes is of great simplicity, and at the same time of great power, but a power that would be oppressive. He reminds me of a beautiful thunder-cloud. He is very tall, of a strong build, and rather stout than otherwise; the countenance strong and manly, with a very dark complexion; while several scars, as of sabre wounds, no way disfigured the face. An agreeable expression, at times, played about his mouth; but that which spoils the whole countenance, and gives, at the same time, a something startling, nay, almost hideous to it, is his habit of contracting together the great black eyebrows, till they form together one direct line over the nose. As soon as they separate again the countenance brightens, and one is almost compelled to exclaim, "It is beautiful!" Under those brows are seated a pair of eyes which I cannot understand. They seem to be changeably black, and burned yellow. Sometimes too, even when the mouth speaks, the eyes will be perfectly inexpressive; again they will fix themselves with such a keen, penetrating glance, that one quails involuntarily before them; again they will sometimes flash forth glances suddenly, like flames bursting abroad in night. This wonderful and rapid change prevails in his voice likewise, and I am surprised if it do not go even beyond this. Another peculiarity in him also I observed, indicative of a fearful nature, and which I have observed also in other men of violent passions, that is, a vein upon the scull, which has the exact form of the thunderbolt, especially when any excitement strongly agitates him.

For the rest, his demeanour pleases me. It is perfectly simple, without any trace of constraint, or any pretensions whatever; and yet, at the same time, he has nothing frank about him, and nothing which inspires confidence. He seems to me like some powerful element, of which I know not whether it be good or bad, whether it will destroy or make happy. But if these wonderful eyes were riveted in love on any one; if this voice spoke words of love—then, believe me, he would be dangerous. Above all, I have never seen any one who so much resembled a mastery. I have both desire and anxiety to acquire a thorough understanding of him.

But, thank God that Lars Anders is no gloomy secret; that his soul is clear and undisguised as God's daylight! for this constitutes the blessedness of united life, and the peace of home.

6th July.

To-morrow Baron Stellan S. comes. I cannot say that I rejoice about it, while Lars Anders is quite ardent with preparations for his reception. There is scarcely anything good enough for him. He will be treated and petted as if he were a little coquettish countess. Such a dainty gentleman must be a weariful guest, especially at the rustic Rosenvik.

"Yes, yes, Bear! he shall have your Turkish slippers. This real China wash-hand-basin, too!"

"Yes, yes, child!"

"Your gold-youth shall have all!"

But I wish the gentleman of the bedchamber was in Constantinople! However, Bear is so happy; he likes the man so, that, on his account, I will appear amiable.

10th July.

Baron Stellan is here, and all goes on excellently. He is polite, agreeable, seems satisfied with everything, and is one with whom it is extremely easy to live. He takes walks with Bear; talks of physic and politics with him; and, while I work, either reads aloud to me, or chats pleasantly. One soon gets acquainted with him, especially when one has seen him a few days. It is true that life in the country assists a great deal, particularly when persons are together the whole day.

My husband has desired me, on Cousin Stellan's account, to stay at home, and to make it a point that he shall find in our house both pleasure and contentment. He loves his young ward with all his heart. See here his portrait, made with a few flourishes of the pen.

I could almost name him as the opposite of De Romilly. This is a vast, wild, natural scene; that, on the contrary, a lovely, perfect, well-kept English pleasure-garden. A fine education has polished Cousin Stellan, and made the very best of him; his handsome and graceful figure presents itself early; the unconstraint of his carriage ennoble his natural gifts. The mouth, round, which plays at times an elegant and rather sarcastic smile, shows, when it opens, the most beautiful teeth, whose whiteness is only set off by the dark-coloured *mustache*. The eyes are not large, but they have a fine expression; and the dark-brown hair falls in graceful curls upon the white forehead. The toilet is performed with extraordinary care and much taste. What can I say more?

Cousin Stellan has many talents: draws, sings well, talks in the most agreeable manner; and has, with all this, at least in the country, something unassuming in tone and bearing, for which one thanks him, especially when one

takes into consideration his position in society, and his prospects in life. Somewhat too much, I think, he busies himself with his toilet; but there is nothing bad in that; and, after all, it is very natural for one who is very young, rich, and handsome, to do so.

11th.

He is wonderful, the worthy Cousin Stellan; and I cannot understand really what he properly is! In the first place, I see that he is not a true Christian. Yesterday evening, he spoke a great deal about Mohammedanism, and called it the wisest and best of all religions—praising the Koran as the best of books. He declared, quite candidly, that he wished he had been born either a Turk or a Persian, that he might have spent all his days in Oriental pleasures—might have had his *serail*, and such like.

I was quite excited at this speech, and contended warmly against the Koran, without knowing much about its contents, and said many contemptuous things against all these Turkish ideas. Cousin Stellan did not allow himself to be disturbed by all this, but spoke his thoughts, with reference to the highest state of human happiness, quite distinctly. It was not at all edifying to hear. I was a little angry; and, beyond this, I was as much provoked by my own warmth as by Stellan's coolness, and, more than all, by the indifference of Lars Anders, who, during all our discourse, never spoke a word, but only sat making faces, while he was carving at a chess-queen.

The conversation was interrupted by the evening meal, and was not afterward renewed; but I could not let Bear go to rest that night before I had some talk with him on the morals of his gold-youth. I must also confess, that neither was I much more contented with him. He defended Stellan quite too well; and assured me, that notwithstanding his Turkish notions, he was a most upright fellow, and never would be guilty of anything unworthy. "His only error," said he, "is a little levity as regards women; but this," added he, "with young men, is such a common failing, that one must not judge them too harshly on that account."

"Good!" said I; "and now, Bear, I'll tell you what—if he, while you are away, out of a little levity, endeavours to win my heart, I shall think that this is only something quite usual in a young man; so I shall not be very severe with him."

Lars Anders looked so much astonished and confounded, that I laughed, embraced him, and set him right; and, at last, he came over to my opinion, that it might be better, if Stellan possessed sounder principles; if he were steady and well married. His mother and his whole family, he told me, greatly wish that he should marry, but he himself shows no inclination to do so. My husband encouraged me to talk with him of the happiness of marriage, and I certainly will not omit to do so, nor also to read some part of the catechism to him; he is not Sultan yet, and must hear the truth.

13th, evening.

I have, my dear Maria, certainly, many qualities of a good preacher; as, for instance, faith, seriousness, and zeal; but, alas! not the power of convincing my auditor.

Will you now, good Maria, hear my sermon and its consequences? I sat by the open window; my heart was light, and I sang in emulation of the birds in the elder-bush. Stellan came in, and, seating himself near me, began pulling

to pieces some beautiful monthly roses which stood in a glass on the table. I thought the opportunity a favourable one, and felt myself excited in spirit to commence a lecture.

In order to lead the conversation, I began, perhaps not very discreetly, to reprove him for destroying the flowers, which, if spared, would have afforded him more pleasure.

"They would, at all events, soon wither," said he, still pursuing his employment; "and it is exactly their perishableness which makes them beautiful to me. I know no flowers so wearisome as everlastings."

You may thus easily see which way the door was opened. I rushed in hastily, and began at once on the chapter of marriage. I fell at once upon Stellan's favourite idea, and exalted the desirable and pure joys of life, in opposition to fleeting pleasures, to butterfly-life. I painted in warm colours, which I drew from my own heart, the beauty, the unending happiness, which develops itself in a well-assorted marriage.

Cousin Stellan answered me, at first, only evasively—sometimes with a little jest, sometimes with politeness—as, for example, "If all ladies were like Franziska, I would be a married man directly! If all marriages resembled yours," &c.

I affected to hear nothing of all this; but, in my zeal to get him married, placed as it were, in array before him, one pretty and well-bred girl after another. But Stellan found faults in every one. This had large feet; that had ugly teeth; the third dressed ill; the fourth had a disagreeable voice. At last, quite provoked by all these objections, I asked him whether he really, after all, thought himself so very magnificent!

"God forbid!" exclaimed he, with an agreeable, but peculiar intonation; but I saw that he was entirely satisfied with himself; and, as I could not deny but that he was uncommonly handsome and agreeable, I began to speak of the inward man; reprov'd him for his superficialness; said that mere outward attractions were nothing but dust, and exalted the beauty of the soul as most important, especially in those who censure young ladies on account of their hands and feet. In connexion herewith, I said the most beautiful things on the subject of family life, which I praised with a zeal equal to that of the deceased Miss Rönquist.* My descriptions affected me, and I grew quite warm; but Stellan cooled me down by an affected yawn, and by quietly humming the melody of "Old Noah."† This made me quite angry, and I told him that he was a heathen, an orangoutang, unworthy of the hand of a noble girl, and that he did not deserve to partake of the highest and purest happiness of life.

"But is not that happiness of which you speak, Franziska," becoming at once quite grave, "like the Phoenix, only a beautiful fable on earth? Can you, Franziska, who appear so certain and so much at home on this subject, name to me, among all the families that you know, one single one which is really happy, and really united, and which blesses the band that holds them together, not merely at one moment of their lives, but under all the changes of their lifetime? Name me but one such family, Franziska," said he, looking at me earnestly and keenly.

I began to reflect and to consider. Is it not the

* A character in "The President's Daughter," another story by Miss Bremer.

† *Gubben Noach*, a popular Swedish song, by the favourite of the people, Bellman.

most absurd thing in the world, that often the very word, the very thing, that we require, escapes from us? It was exactly so with me and the happy family. I fancied I knew many such, but now I could not bethink myself of a single one. I sought and sought. I sprang into this house, and out of that house, among all my acquaintance; I grew anxious and warm, because I could not find what I sought for; while Stellan sat looking at me with a secret and mischievous delight.

In order to save myself and family happiness, I thought it best to object to his extravagant demands, and began, "Perfect happiness is nowhere found on earth—" Stellan saved me the necessity of saying more, by his interruption. "You are right, Franziska," said he, "and least of all in family life. The ephemera, man, can only enjoy happiness or bliss on earth on the condition that he live there as an ephemera; that, like a butterfly, he rocks himself on the tree twigs, sucks the honey from the flowers, and, like it, too, does not fetter himself to the ground. So soon, indeed, as he does this, he is the prey of worms and creeping things. Then all that is dull and insipid in life—the heavy, weariful prose of life—comes over him; the wings of the Psyche fall off—the butterfly becomes the worm. Believe me, Franziska, I have seen more of life than you; and sadly too much either to praise it, or to wish myself to play the part of a '*père de famille*.' The family is an instrument which sooner or later gets out of tune; this is the nature of the strings, and in their relationship to each other. I will show you this in some families with whom I am acquainted. I might begin with my own family, since I also, Franziska, have had parents, and brothers and sisters; have also heard quarrels, have quarrelled myself; have been envious, and have bickered with my own flesh and blood. But this now all is past; we have separated, and have different interests, and, in consequence, are become good friends.

"I will speak of the A.s," continued he; "they had, I believe, a good income, till the children grew up; these children were badly educated; they turned out ill; and now, through them, the parents have sunk into poverty and care.

"The B.s did quite differently. They were stern and despotic, and the children have all escaped from home, shunning it ever more than a prison.

"The C.s made it their most important business that their children should be well educated. They had them instructed in everything; gave them teachers of every kind; spared no cost; and rejoiced, and were proud, for a while, of the progress their children made. The children were rich in knowledge and talent, and despised their parents, who, in comparison of them, were ignorant; and now the parents grieve, silently, like shadows, over their brilliant children.

"With the D.s it appears much better. They give now, as they have done for thirty years, magnificent suppers; but, if you saw them near, if you knew the emptiness, the coldness of their life!—ha! the eatables on their table are the only things that warm and unite them.

"At the E.s, for a long time, all was gay. They were joyous, friendly, hospitable; their daughters were called the Three Graces; they made parties, and gave entertainments. Years went on; the Three Graces grew old in the paternal house; they withered away together, and the world forgot them. They remain together, alone, and pout through their uneventful life. In

an evening, they sit at a round table, light candles, and wait for company—which never comes.

"I will not speak about the F.s. The wife has one will, the husband another; it is perpetual storm there, and the children are accustomed to say, 'If there be not a tempest in the north, there is in the south—but there is always a north wind.'

"If one only knew how to keep things smooth!" said good Madame G., as she wished to heal a breach which her violent husband had occasioned in her domestic union. Thus has the family gone on smoothening, and has, by degrees, smoothened itself out of all comfort and order; they keep on smoothening still, and manage just to keep together. It is a family in a state of perpetual asthma; it neither lives nor dies.

"My mother wished that I should take a wife out of the H. family. I went there one evening; all looked charmingly; the daughters, handsome and well dressed, all perfumed, and comfortable. I went again, one forenoon. A pair of—not clean—stockings lay upon a chair in the drawing-room, and an infamous smell of sour paste met me, from somewhere. I went into another room, and away flew the daughters—from the spinning-wheel. Housewifery is an excellent thing, but spinning deranges the toilet; and to smell sour paste, only once, is an abomination. Sour paste and domestic happiness do not at all accord, in my estimation."

"But that is childish!" exclaimed I; "you will never be able to live on the earth with over-refinement like that!"

"Yes," answered he, "I confess that this may seem very trifling, but such is my nature; the sour paste of housewifery deterred me from becoming the head of a family.

"My friend J," continued he, "had been married four years, during which time I had not seen him. Not long since, I happened to be in the country where he resided, and availed myself of the repeated invitations I had received to visit him in his Idyllic home. When I arrived there, I found two barefooted servant-girls scouring the first floor; in the second I nearly fell down, having entangled my foot in a string which fastened a spinning-wheel to the leg of the stove; in the third I heard children crying with all their might. I waited several minutes, that the crying might cease. I grew tired of this, however, and so, half dead, rushed, with a leap over the scouring-tubs, out of this Idyllic home."

"You chose your visiting-time very badly," said I; "must not people have their houses scoured? and must not little children cry, sometimes? Ought not one to have patience with little children?"

"That I believe, Franziska," returned he; "but, exactly because I do not possess this beautiful patience, and because I do not think these family scenes are to be coveted, exactly on that account I have no inclination for the marriage state. But I have more weighty objections than these," said he, "against domestic life. There is a something in man which tends ever to repel. The more individuals are brought into close and enduring connexion, the more this stone of repulsion is felt, the more do its jagged edges and angles wound. Outward circumstances assist this; one person crowds another so easily, they are mutually in each other's way; and the consideration which one person has, and must have, for another, is only like a leaden weight upon his freedom and his enjoyment. If it be commanded that we live for another, then, properly

speaking, nobody lives happily for himself. I do not deny that there may be high and enduring happiness in marriage and in domestic life, but these instances are the few exceptions. They are the echoes which sound across to us from a lost paradise; and, as I am speaking on this subject, what do you say to the apple in the history of Adam and Eve? It has descended to all their posterity; hence, most families have an apple to bite, which occasions trouble and discord.

"Would you know, Franziska, where the greatest need, the greatest *ennui*, the greatest envy, the greatest bitterness, the most intrinsic mutual hate are—would you know where the most tearful eyes, the palest cheeks, the most joyless, the most wearied hearts, may be found? I will show you them all in marriage, in the domestic circle—in one word, in family life!"

I cannot tell you how I felt after these descriptions of Stellan's, because I was compelled, in so many things, to acknowledge truth; and, although he saw all in a one-sided point of view, and I could laugh over many things, as, for instance, at the sour paste, yet many others really touched me to the heart. I was shocked at the thought that there was so much mental poverty, so much deep misery in family life. But still, the idea of family life was one which I loved; one which I had faith in; which had grown up, as it were, with all that was good in me. All this now seemed profaned by Stellan. I felt sadness; I felt anxiety, and pain, and a thousand mixed feelings filled my eyes with tears, while I exclaimed, "But I am happy! my husband is happy! we are happy!"

"Yes; now is the honeymoon," said the unmerciful Stellan, "and perhaps yet for one, two, or three years. But let these years pass; let children and care come—you'll have, for instance, ten girls—what will you do with these? No money, no marriage; one girl lame, one with a spine complaint."

"Ten girls!" I was shocked. I saw them already around me, tall, grown-up, demanding that I should give them happiness, as I had given them life. I saw one of them sickly; one with a spine complaint. I sank down under this burden, which was too heavy for me, and, while I wept without being able to say a word, up rose Stellan, threw away my last monthly rose, and went out. The abominable wretch! I almost wished never to see him again!

"Ten girls!" For a long time I could think of nothing but these words. By degrees, however, I endeavoured to calm myself, and began seriously, and as a Christian, to reflect on the affair. I was no longer shocked at my ten girls, but was quite consoled by them. I would devote myself altogether to them; I would make of them industrious, God-fearing human beings. They should become good and happy; should love one another; and, sound in heart, should be able to face the world. The more I studied my family picture, the more alluring it seemed. I began regularly to love my ten girls, but, most of all, the lame and the afflicted one. I created no illusion; but I felt, in my strengthened heart, that it really would succeed, and that, with God's and my husband's help, I would make the ten girls fortunate. And then I thought how rich I should be at the day of judgment, when I could say, "Here I am, Father, with the children that thou hast given me."

So felt I, so thought I, and I was calm and

joyful in spirit. I went out into the birch-grove to cool my red eyes and cheeks; and then I had several things to look after in the kitchen and the storeroom; and thus, what with one thing, and what with another, I had nearly forgotten my ten girls; but, as Lars Anders came home, some way or other, all the depression, all the despondency, seemed to fall upon my heart again, and I became as weak as a child. When my husband came up and kissed me, I threw my arms round his neck, and both laughed and cried at the same time.

"No doubt, Lars Anders," said I, "you would love me, and be satisfied with me, and we should be happy, even if we had ten daughters; and you would love them all, even if they were lame, and had a spine complaint!"

I could not properly finish my speech. Good Lars Anders! he made such a horrid face, and looked just as if the ten daughters were hanging round his neck! But, as he saw me so agitated, he gave me a glass of water, and begged me to speak Swedish—he imagined, probably, that the "ten daughters" was Hebrew.

I explained to him the whole affair in perspicuous Swedish, and then he laughed loudly, and assured me that we should always be happy, and that he would always love both me and the children I should give him.

Stellan came in at the same moment. He appeared embarrassed and distressed to see me so much excited; but, in the joy of my heart, I offered him my hand, and exclaimed, "We will be happy, my husband and I; we will be happy, even with ten daughters, and even if they, every one of them, be sickly; we will love each other, and love them also."

Stellan was really affected; he blushed, kissed my hand, and prayed me to forgive his having jested so rudely. Lars Anders was kind to me as an angel, and would not go to the table till I was quite calm. I hastened to become so, but still could scarcely swallow a morsel. I fancy my ten daughters stuck in my throat; beyond this, I fancied Lars Anders looked at me with a degree of consternation. Ten daughters! But that really is too many!

But I will not think any more about it. While Lars Anders and Stellan take a walk, and the evening paints the scenes of nature in *sepia* and Indian ink, I will cast another glance on Cousin Stellan's ornamental pictures of family life. Are they really true? In many individual cases, ah, yes! but, in the general, no, oh, no! And, even were there in earthly families more of shadow than light, Thou all-wise Artist, who hast painted in such magnificent light the great picture of life, Thou couldst teach us to spread out the colouring better upon our small canvass. But Thou hast already taught us, and it now depends upon ourselves; and, if we labour with fervency and truth, our family picture will be beautiful, and will be worthy of its place in the collection of the Most Blessed.

"One finds," says Stellan, "a something among human beings that always tends to thrust them asunder." I grant that envy, pretension, unreasonableness, *ennui*, and a thousand large and small stones of repulsion, are capable of occasioning bitter feeling. I grant, also, that they are felt most keenly exactly when the circle is most confined—that is, in family life. What then? Is there no power, mild, yet energetic, whose efficacy consists in equalizing and sweetening all, and changing even evil into good?

Who will not here remember the doctrine of the Apostle, and who has not blessed it a thousand times in his life, "Love is patient and mild?" etc.

I will now examine a few of Stellan's family scenes. I will leave the external relationship as it is, but will conduct into the interior bosom of these families the angel-sisters, Truth and Love. Then behold how the picture will be changed! See, for example, the family with the talent-gifted children and the uneducated parents. True instruction, true enlightenment would have ennobled the children. It never would have happened, then, that they would lightly have esteemed good and upright parents because they were better informed than they. They would have known that true human worth consists in moral qualities and in upright conduct. They would have surrounded the parents with reverence and gratitude, enlivened their home, and beautified their days with their talents.

And then the family of the Three Graces! A melancholy picture! I must yawn when I think of it; but it is not the family-bond, but vanity, high-mindedness, and inward emptiness, which has placed them in this puppet condition.

If Stellan tear away happiness from families, I would willingly know where he places it. I will ask him what men and what position in life he regards as the happiest. Perhaps a bachelor's life! But, then, he must be an egotist who disowns all bonds of nature; I envy no one such a happiness. But I will ask Stellan if he himself be happy.

13A.

I have asked Stellan. At first he would give only an evasive answer, jested, and was witty, but without joyousness; but, as I questioned him still more earnestly, and besought him to speak the truth, he also became earnest, and said, "I am not happy! Life appears to me poor, and I often feel an almost insupportable weight in myself."

"Ah, thank God!" exclaimed I, quite charmed and excited. He looked at me astonished, and I continued: "Thus you are not the unworthy egotist, that you must have been, if you could have been happy with your way of thinking. You have described married life so as to make one weep; but I, Stellan, could describe to you the life of a bachelor, and you would find it so miserable, so barren, that you would not give a pinch of snuff for it. But thus it need not be with you, Stellan; you are a good, thinking being; you will discover the true worth of life, and will renounce all extravagant pretensions and all exaggerated sensibilities; you will become happy through noble employment, through an amiable wife, through domestic and family life."

He smiled half sorrowfully, shook his head, and said something about sour paste.

"But Cousin Stellan," said I, "in our house, all domestic business goes forward; also here do we spin, make paste, and scour. Is it here, then, so comfortable?"

"If all women were like you, Franziska!" returned Stellan, took my hand, kissed it, said something about "this white, fine hand," kissed it again and again, became crimson, and cast upon me an extraordinary glance. I also became crimson, and felt I know not how, drew my hand back, began to talk of the weather, and then went directly into the kitchen. A stupid scene on the whole, but it must not occur again

unreproved; no, so sure as Lars Anders lives, and I am his Fanny!

Think, if *Ma chère mère's* lecture should actually serve my turn, and I really should find an occasion to say, "Sir, you are greatly mistaken," &c. But in no case should I go directly to my husband and say, "Dear friend, so and so has occurred." A woman who loves herself and her duty can take care of herself. One does not need any *gendarmism* for one's self. But perhaps at this very moment I am making use of it, when I am shocked at so slight an affair.

In the mean time, I have a sort of satisfaction in knowing that Stellan, with his way of thinking and feeling, is not happy; and had I only properly reflected, I needed not to have asked the question; for Stellan, with all his gifts, is an *ennuyé*. He opens a book, reads a little, yawns, and throws it aside. He takes a newspaper, and does exactly the same. He begins a drawing, and leaves it uncompleted. He has real interest and pleasure in nothing. He is willingly in the fresh air, loves nature and flowers, but will remorselessly destroy the loveliest of them. It is soon too warm, soon too cold, for him; sometimes it is windy, and the wind is to him something horrible. Extraordinary! this man, in every-day life so affected, so solicitous of his own convenience, is yet, as I have heard from my husband, as determined as bold. He has good intellect, fine knowledge, and might, perhaps, become a distinguished man, if he would only give himself the trouble to study. But perhaps he smells sour paste in books; and in that he may be correct, even beyond the binding.

14A.

No; I was not wrong to *gendarmize*, and be upon my guard. They are precisely the little things which must put people on their guard; for the proverb is true, "A great fire often arises from a small spark." How often is a slur, deserved or undeserved, cast on the reputation of a young woman, merely because she has not been circumspect in little things!

We spent yesterday afternoon on Svand. Cousin Stellan was unusually lively and polite, and invited Lars Anders and me, on our return home, to a game at ring-throwing. I accepted the proposal gladly; and soon our rings, wreathed with their pink ribands, were flying among the green trees, and merrily and dexterously we caught them again on our sticks. Lars Anders threw several times, but soon grew weary, panted, sent all pleasures which required exertion to the hangman, and so went into the house. I confess my error, Maria; as a rational wife, true to her duty, I ought to have followed my husband; but I was so heartily delighted with the game, and had not the least desire to leave off! So, warm, ardent, and almost wild, Stellan and I continued to throw our rings, all this while getting farther and farther from the house. At length twilight came on, so that we could not distinctly see the course of the rings, and Stellan's remained hanging behind me in a birch-tree. I sprang towards it, and leaped up to reach it, when I suddenly found myself embraced by Stellan, while he whispered close to my cheek, "Fanny, dear Fanny!" I was excited by a thousand strange feelings; but in a moment I extricated myself, and said—odd enough—in *Ma chère mère's* own words, "Baron S., you mistake; your ring hangs upon the tree there!" This I spoke with so much emphasis, that I was understood immediately.

"Aha!" said Stellan, somewhat confused, as I thought, while he reached down his ring.

"It gets cool now," continued I: "it is best to go in;" and without farther parley, hastened to the house, while Stellan slowly followed, humming an air out of "Fra Diavolo."

I was sitting beside my own good husband, and telling him how dear he was to me, which communication he received with the air of a good-tempered pacha, as, half an hour later, Stellan returned. He held a beautiful spray of wild roses in his hand, which he presented to me, saying, "I have taken away all the thorns."

"Many thanks," said I, took the spray, and stuck it—in my bosom? No, Maria, you could not believe that; I stuck it in Lars Anders's buttonhole. Stellan hummed the air anew, and, shortly after, we separated, somewhat coldly.

Oh, no, my husband, your confidence in me shall not be abused! I will not in the least deceive it. My ten daughters shall, at the least, receive from their mother the inheritance of an unspotted reputation, and a good example.

But what shall I now do? I will not sit here at home the whole day, in order to keep company with Cousin Stellan; neither can I leave the house, because Lars Anders has so expressly desired me to remain at home; much less will I go to him, and say, "My friend, so and so," &c., because this would only disturb his peace, and the relation between him and his young friend, who has certainly no bad intention, but is only indiscreet. I know now what I shall do. This morning I have household occupation; in the afternoon we go to Carlstora, and introduce him to *Ma chère mère*. To-morrow Serena comes to me; and then I will move heaven and earth but she shall come and spend from eight to fourteen days with me at Rosenvik. I will compel Lars Anders to tyrannise over the whole Dahl family but it shall be accomplished. It will do Serena good, and me also.

154.

It is vexations, that Cousin Stellan should have adopted exactly Jane Maria's method of indicating discontent. There is, it is true, some little difference in the way and means; because Stellan does not exactly sulk, but he feigns an indifference and coldness, which are anything but agreeable. He would convince me, as it seems, that I am the very person in the world about whom he would least concern himself. I try to make him feel that I do not notice it; but it always annoys one not to be in entire friendliness with every one about one. In the mean time, were I now cold towards Stellan, he might almost imagine that I wanted to offend him back.

We spent yesterday at Carlstora, where *Ma chère mère* received Stellan in an extraordinary manner. "I knew your father, my baron," said she; "he was a fine man, but a *bon vivant*. I have heard say that the son resembles the father; and, though we ought to honour the tree which has lent us its shade, yet I must say that you might follow a better example. Now, your father reformed in his latter years; and I hope that the son will do so, and think about a good marriage in time. In doing so, you would act prudently, my baron; for the proverb says, 'Early wooing brings no man ruin;' and 'Better one cake with peace than two with strife.'"

Stellan looked quite astonished, and somewhat irritated by this unexpected lecture. *Ma chère mère* did not seem to be particularly in a peaceful humour, and when we looked round us we

found the whole house entangled in strife. *Ma chère mère* and Jean Jacques had fallen out on account of the new arrangements he wished to introduce on the estate, and the old abuses which he wished to reform. The strife between the old and the new had commenced, but *Ma chère mère* held the reins of government fast in her hand; and Jean Jacques, compelled to yield, began to find his situation there not agreeable. Of all these things he complained to my husband. Jane Maria was in open feud with Ebba, and related to me, in a bitter tone, all the injustice which she had to bear; which all consisted in such a many trifles, as compelled me almost to laugh as much as cry; for it is quite as laughable as lamentable, when people, who might live without troubles, imbitter each other's existence by a multitude of unnecessary, self-created entanglements. I endeavoured cautiously to make Jane Maria aware of this, but some way it was unseasonable. She grew excited, to think that any one considered those trifles which so nearly concerned her; and gave me to understand that she was quite capable of deciding what, in this whole affair, was of importance, and what was not.

I had quite determined not again to make gray weather between myself and Jane Maria; and, more than this, just now, I felt a necessity for union; so, without any regard to her dignified words and air, I merely replied, "Yes, certainly, best Maria, your education, your understanding, place you high enough over Ebba for you to have forbearance with her childish folly, without her abusing your goodness."

"You do not know Ebba," somewhat calmer: "she is full of self-love, pretension, and haughtiness. She would tread upon my head if I did not oppose a very high tone to her."

There was a time when I believed that every person possessed in himself a preponderating fund of equity and sound reason; when I believed that they desired nothing so much as to be enlightened; that if they only heard the truth, they would acknowledge it; and that, when they had acknowledged it, they would correct their faults, and, in consequence of this, become contented and happy. At that time I spoke the truth to many, spared good counsel to none, and willingly became the peacemaker in quarrels; but I very seldom found that I was thus able to do a service to any one, least of all to myself. And, to be truly candid, reciprocal service of this kind, which some of my good friends have done for me, has especially tended to convince me that the too candid method, in such cases, is not the best, by any means. In later years, I have been remarkably circumspect in speaking the truth to people; have been very sparing in giving good advice; and have had a salutary fear of rushing into quarrels as peacemaker. But if, without any fault of my own, I do get into this melancholy office, I then close my heart, with a sigh, endeavour to do my best, and make use of the experience which I have gained through my former unfortunate attempts. On this account, I did not now say to Jane Maria, "My good Jane Maria, you yourself are haughty, and full of pretensions; they are your faults precisely which call forth those of Ebba. If you were more reasonable in your behaviour, she would be less overbearing in hers!" I spoke out none of these thoughts of my heart, but merely sighed, and said, "The poor child, she has certainly had a faulty education. Those who have been

better trained must excuse her. A defective education is a positive misfortune."

"Yes, a positive misfortune," returned she, as it seemed in a milder feeling towards Ebba.

But it was not alone with Ebba, but with *Ma chère mère*, also, that Jane Maria was dissatisfied.

The day before, *Ma chère mère* had the horses put to her carriage, and had said to the two sisters-in-law, "One of you can accompany me." The carriage stood before the door, and *Ma chère mère* took her seat in it. She waited a long time before either of the young ladies appeared, and then both came out at the same moment, with the intention of going. There was room but for one of them; both wished to go, yet neither would yield to the other. A violent dispute arose between them on the very steps of the carriage; *Ma chère mère* looked on for a moment, and then, giving the whip to her horses, drove off without either, to the great displeasure and astonishment of both.

Later in the day, as I walked in the park by Ebba's side—for Ebba, since her morning promenade, has become a great lover of the country—I heard all her complaints against Jane Maria. Jane Maria had such unbearably lofty manners towards her; Jane Maria had called her a little fool; Jane Maria would always be the first, would always go first through a door, would always be first served at table; Jane Maria would have everything better; more magnificent than her; found fault with her taste in dress and ornaments; always saw faults in her, and in all that she possessed, while she exalted her own possessions, and instanced them as distinguished and excellent. All this grieved poor Ebba sadly; it grieved me, also, though in another manner.

When she told me all this, we were standing on the edge of a flowing water, whose shore was richly adorned with leaves and flowers. All around us was fresh, still, and beautiful; my very heart was warmed by it, and I felt that I could speak to Ebba in quite another way than to Jane Maria. I threw my arm, therefore, round her, and said, "Dear Ebba, would you be happy?"

"Yes, certainly," answered she, looking at me amazed.

"Ah, my little Ebba," continued I, "then rivet not yourself to such trifles, and don't let them annoy you. See how glorious and beautiful it is here all around you! and you have not rejoiced in these things, have scarcely observed them, because Jane Maria carries herself loftily, and has more costly things than you. Nay, dear Ebba, is it not lamentable that we should spoil all the good and beautiful which life has, through things like these?"

To repeat all that I said, in my zeal, would be to go too far; it is enough that I found a willing ear in Ebba, and that I described to her the folly of such contentions, and the bitter pang which they produce, till Ebba both laughed and cried, and promised, on my behalf, to concede, in future, all that precedence to Jane Maria after which she strove.

In the mean time, Lars Anders, on his side, had to mediate between *Ma chère mère* and Jean Jacques; and, through his influence with both parties, it was so arranged that, while Jean Jacques was to be less precipitate in overwhelming *Ma chère mère* with his new, reformed systems, she should be willing to take his propositions into consideration.

And during all this time what became of Stellan? He busted himself with those who, for the

time being, were at peace; made himself agreeable to all the ladies, one after another, excepting to me, and succeeded perfectly, not even excepting *Ma chère mère*, who asserted of him, "Heaven! he is truly polite, the Baron S. He did justice to his dinner; he is a sensible young man!"

I rejoiced over Ebba during the evening, for she kept her promise excellently, and, instead of making Jane Maria's beloved privileges a cause of strife, she prevented it several times. Jane Maria, at first, looked as if some stratagem of war must be concealed under this amicable show, but at last, convinced of the friendly sincerity of Ebba, she also became quite changed, and descended from her lofty pretensions.

We foolish human beings! How often we torment ourselves and others, and yet could often so easily change that picture of discontent and disquiet into a picture of peace and rest!

When we were again at home, Lars Anders and I related, mutually, how we both had been called upon to "sit between as umpires," and we both felt that never should any one have to come, and thus to "sit between us."

I have at this moment received the news of Aunt Ulla's death. My good Maria, I cannot say otherwise than "It is good!" especially since I hear how happily she died. Aunt Sophie, who writes me this news, adds, "Anne Marie can now remove into her chamber, which is so much more cheerful and convenient than the one she has been obliged to put up with."

There are people, harmless, peaceable people, whose departure is good, more particularly because they make room. This thought saddens me! Oh, if I should ever come to be in the way of my neighbours—if any one among them should ever long for my place, then will I forth—forth!

Here am I now, sitting and weeping over this fancy, and over the thought of my ten daughters.

CHAPTER VII.

Rosenvik, July 18th.

YESTERDAY Serena and I began our singing-lessons. At ten o'clock in the forenoon, a pretty little horse, bearing a light, graceful burden, came cantering up to my door, while a heavy *calèche*, antique as its possessors, rolled up also with the patriarchs. I was glad to see that venerable pair under my roof, and delighted to receive Serena, who seemed already to breathe fresh life both from the ride and the beauty of the morning.

I had a little breakfast in readiness, and my eggs, my fresh butter and foaming chocolate, were praised no little. After the good old people had breakfasted and taken a view of Rosenvik, they returned, and I kept Serena with me for the day. I was imperative that she should not be fetched till nine in the evening, and this was promised me. The good old people tenderly embraced their favourite, who accompanied them to their carriage with a thousand graceful attentions.

After this, we had a singing-lesson. Serena's voice is weak, but a fine counter-tenor. Our practice was principally of the voice and the reading of the notes, for her expression and execution are truly excellent. This her own soul has taught her better than any master could do.

It grieved me to call Serena *Mis*, for she belongs to that class of beings with whom I seem

driven, by an irresistible impulse, to use the pleasing monosyllable *thou*. I asked to be permitted to do so; and asked, farther, that she would call me *Aunt*, the most wearisome title which I know, if my seniority appeared to demand some sort of respect from her. Serena laughed, and refused to honour me on account of my years, and prayed me, if there were no other impediment, to be permitted to say *thou*, also, to me. I gladly assented; and, on our comparing ages, found, to my astonishment, that I was only four years older than she. She is three-and-twenty, but the beauty of her complexion and figure would not lead one to suppose so.

After we had arranged these affairs—laugh not that *thou* and *thou* is in Sweden an important moment in an acquaintance; a great step forward, sometimes also backward in friendship—we took our work, went out and seated ourselves upon a bench, in the shade of the lime and elder hedge. Serena, whose fingers have an extraordinary skill in many delicate works, plucked some flowers, and now set herself to imitate, with great accuracy, their seed-vessels and other parts.

Cousin Stellan had been out on a shooting excursion with the brothers Stålmark the whole of the day, and I was glad to be alone with Serena. I was curious to hear her speak of Bruno, and so I turned the conversation upon him.

She sighed at the mention of his name; and when I questioned if she thought he had a bad heart, she replied, warmly, "No, certainly not! His heart, indeed, must have been good and tender, or how, otherwise, would he have been so kind towards me, who was only a weak and sickly child, and must have been burdensome to others? Is not that Ramm on the other side of the lake?" asked she.

I replied in the affirmative.

"I remember yet so well," resumed she, "how Bruno led me about the woods, or drew me in my little carriage. The first impressions which I received of the beauty of life and of nature were from this time. I remember so well how the murmuring in the wood delighted me, and how I was enchanted with the flowers which he gathered for me! If he sang, I sang too; and when he bore me in his arms, and sprang over the mountain-ravines, I felt no fear, but only a little shudder, which was more akin to pleasure than to pain. He was never impatient or unfriendly towards me, and I shall never forget how once, when he was about to beat one of his brothers, he desisted when I wept and called him by his name. If his heart had not been good, why should he have been so gentle towards me? Once he saved my life at the peril of his own; it was in the park at Ramm. Some starlings had built in an oak-tree, and I, in childish folly, desired to possess the eggs. He seated me in the grass and climbed into the tree, from the topmost boughs of which, however, he precipitated himself, on hearing me utter a cry for help. Without thought of himself, he threw himself down, and, with a shriek of horror, snatched from my neck a snake which had wound itself there. I saw him strangle the snake, and tread upon his head, and then, taking me in his arms, I remember that he wept; while I tried to pacify him with my childish caresses! Ah, depend upon it," continued she, after a moment's pause, "that he was not wisely treated. They certainly had not sufficient regard to his ability of loving. Had he, he would not have caused his mother so

much anxiety, and would not have fled from his home and his fatherland."

"Do you remember his appearance?" I inquired.

"Not clearly," she said. "It seems to me as if I saw, through a mist, a handsome, rosy-cheeked boy, with large, beautiful eyes; but if I try to make the image more distinct, it fades."

"And what do you suppose occasioned his flight from home?" I inquired.

"I have been told," said Serena, "that dissension with his mother, and severe treatment on her side, occasioned it. There was great similarity in their tempers. They opposed obstinacy to obstinacy—force against force. Bruno must have died in his exile. Poor Bruno! I have truly lamented his fate, he was so good to me!" said she, with a mournful countenance, while a sentiment of deep sadness filled my heart also.

I changed the conversation then to other persons, spoke of her grand-parents, and as I praised them she became cheerful and joyous. The sentiment of gratitude seemed to prevail in her heart to an uncommon degree; it seemed as if she clung to every recollection which incited to love. If she spoke of a book, also, it was with an acknowledgment of the good she had derived from it; and then how natural and graceful is every word, in short, her whole being! I loved her; she did me good; and I wished that I, also, could be inscribed on a leaf of her remembrance-book.

At dinner we had—Lars Anders—good-humour, good appetite, and, without boasting, good eating. In the afternoon came back Cousin Stellan, in the condition which I generally expect after a shooting excursion, namely, savagely hungry, and without game.

When we had sat and talked pleasantly for an hour after coffee, we determined to make an excursion to Svano, there to eat our evening meal. Serena and I cut bread and butter; filled some bottles with cold *salt*, and laid these, together with a piece of cold roast-meat, in a basket; and with this our cheerful little company wandered down to the shore, where a prettily painted green boat received us. Stellan rowed, a light wind cooled us and curled the water, and, while Serena and I sang "La Biondina," we reached the appointed place. We threw ourselves down on a grassy mound, in the red and white clover, under the great oak-tree—I between my husband and the basket of provisions, and Stellan by Serena; and as I saw them sitting there in the green grass, so lovely and so cheerful, weaving flower-garlands for each other, the transient, perhaps sinful, thought rose in my heart of a possible union between those two.

Bear, lying on the fresh, odorous turf, smoked his pipe, and slowly puffed out the volumes of smoke towards the blue heaven, while he listened to God knows what! foolish nonsense about the Great Mogul, which his wife told him.

Anon, the air seemed suddenly tremulous, and a rush of a far-off tempest of melody reached our ears. This tone, solemn, gloomy, but beautiful, made an extraordinary impression upon us. All were still in a moment, a breeze passed by, and upon this breeze came again a tremulous, mournful, but inexpressibly harmonious tone, which oppressed me to the heart.

"It is the organ at Ramm!" I exclaimed: "the wind bears the sound to us. Oh, that we could hear it nearer! Hush! hush! it comes nearer!"

We listened; the melodious, panting sound came again and again, with every flying wind that came towards us from Ramm, but we could not connect together a whole. The trembling tones mounted and died away like the sighings of a sorrowful spirit, and, as I listened to them, I felt as many an inquirer of the old times must have felt when he pondered on the broken and incomprehensible melodies of being, and believed that the wind of Fate played upon the strings of the Æolian-harp of life. A longing took possession of me, almost an agony, which those only can understand who experience, like me, a passion for music.

"I must hear this near!" exclaimed I, with decision. "Serena, we two will row towards Ramm, and obtain a clear idea of this music, for I shall become mad if I hear these tones without their intelligence. Remain lying there, dear Bear, and smoke your pipe in peace. Pray let us go; and you remain there, Cousin Stellan; we would be alone, Serena and I—we shall soon be back again."

The gentlemen looked dissatisfied; Bear growled as he continued to lie on the grass, while Stellan accompanied us to the boat. Serena and I were quite joyous and ardent. I rowed the little boat easily. The little voyage was enchanting; for the nearer we approached, the more significant became the music. I could have fancied that the boat sped of itself, as if drawn onward by the invisible might of that wonderful music. The evening was calm; the sunbeams trembled into ever darker gold through the wood; higher ever rose the melodious tempest. Serena and I both experienced an elevated delight, although in a different manner. My heart beat violently, and tears of rapture filled my eyes. Serena was calmer; her white hand played with the waves, while an expression of pure delight and child-like piety gleamed in her clear, beautiful eyes.

Both of us remained silent, eager more distinctly to hear that captivating music. The boat approached nearer and nearer to the black walls of Ramm, and at last lay still as smuggler's-craft, in the shadow of the alder-bushes, close under an open window.

There we heard tones which seemed to come from no human hand, the beloved melody of the Neck,* Polika, an interweaving of rich melodies, which, for beauty and power, surpassed all that I had ever heard or imagined before. They were the children of a mighty inspiration. Enraptured, and carried away, as it were, I bowed my head in my hand, and dreamed that the king of the sea, inspired by the beauty of the evening and of nature, made known to us, himself, his wonderful life; that life which he leads in the mysterious depths, and in the crystal castles of the ocean. But all at once the tones ceased, and I woke out of my dream to a consciousness of the present. I seized the oar involuntarily, and, with one little stroke, turned the boat away from the shore; at the same moment both Serena and I turned our eyes to the open window above, but turned them hastily away again, for there stood the dark De Romilly, in his own gloomy person, with his eyes fixed upon us. We blushed, took each an oar, and returned in much shorter time, I fancy, than we went, although our oars had now to keep time without the accompaniment of the music.

* A water-spirit.

In the mean while, as we had been absent nearly two hours, we found, on our return, Cousin Stellan apparently very sleepy, and Bear not quite as good-tempered as we had left him, which did not astonish me; but, however, he was soon perfectly right again, on my heartily praying for forgiveness. I feel at times a certain degree of pleasure in sinning, quarter or no quarter, and then in obtaining dispensation by flattery.

We ate our evening meal in quiet and cheerfulness; but Serena, who began to think of her old relatives, and expected to be sent for, turned her eyes towards Rosenvik.

The carriage arrived the moment our boat reached the shore, and, after we had agreed that the next singing-lesson should be on Friday, she left us, Cousin Stellan attending her to the carriage, and showing her many polite attentions. It is remarkable how becoming all such are to a young man.

"Come very soon again," cried I, after Serena; and her friendly blue eyes smiling an assent from under her little straw hat, she waved an adieu with her hand, and vanished between the green trees.

"That was a splendid girl," said Stellan to me, as we yet wiled away a little time under the alder-trees, "only it is a pity that she is lame."

"To you, Cousin Stellan," said I, laughing, "everything in this world limps."

"But I must confess," returned he, "that I have hardly ever seen a less fault in a lady."

"I agree with you, Cousin," returned I; "and I can even believe it possible that, under certain circumstances, such a fault as this can be seen only as real beauty."

He smiled, and made a motion with his head, as though he might think so too. "Franziska," said he, detaining me as I was about to depart, and with a deep earnestness in his voice, "for the last few days, Franziska, you have not been so friendly towards me as you were. Have I grieved you in any way?"

"Yes," answered I, frankly, "by very nearly convincing me that you cared nothing for my esteem—that grieved me."

"Forgive me," said he, kindly, but gravely, "and think yet well of me. I could not willingly live without your esteem, Franziska. Give me your hand upon it, that you believe me, and forgive me."

"There," said I, giving my hand joyfully, but taking care, at the same time, that he did not kiss it, and went in then to Lars Anders, satisfied to have Stellan's esteem instead of his courtesy, and somewhat satisfied, also, with myself.

To-morrow *Ma chère mère* has a great dinner-party, at which the whole neighbourhood will be assembled. Mr. De Romilly, also, has been invited, although he had paid no visit to Carlsfors. I am very curious to see this enigmatical person again; his music has prepossessed me in his favour; a being who can awaken such melodies must possess deep and strong sentiment.

1844.

I was deceived in my hope of being able to observe closer the gloomy neighbour at Ramm. He came, it is true, to Carlsfors, and his entrance made a great sensation. For myself, an unpleasant feeling passed through me, as I glanced at the lofty, black-apparelled figure, which, in entering, drew together the fierce eyebrows with an almost threatening expression.

Ma chère mère, who was en grande toilette, and really looked very well, approached him majes-

neatly, and made an oration to him in French, which was equally polite and stately; but which, however, the stranger seemed to understand no more than if it had been Laplandish. He stood immovable, with downcast eyes; and, when *Ma chère mère* had ended, returned, in a low voice, a few words, which were inaudible to me, bowed very low, and left her. I fancy *Ma chère mère* was but little edified by the foreign politeness which she had praised so much before; and as if she had been infected by Mr. De Romilly's mood, she, too, contracted her eyebrows, and returned to her seat.

The next moment an extraordinary commotion took place at the end of the room. The gentlemen rushed together; and, as the group opened itself again, De Romilly was seen as pale as death, and almost insensible, supported by two persons, and about to leave the room. Lars Anders attended him out, and *Ma chère mère* ordered whatever the house contained to be at his service, and after a few minutes, taking me with her, she went out to him herself.

Mr. De Romilly, who sat in a corner of the sofa, seemed then to have recovered himself; but his face was concealed by his pocket-handkerchief. *Ma chère mère* questioned him most kindly of his health. He replied, in a hollow voice, that he found himself compelled to leave the house, since the violent headache from which he was suffering would render him unfit for company. *Ma chère mère* said everything which a polite hostess could say on such an occasion, to which he only bowed in silent acknowledgment; and then, recommending him to Lars Anders's care, we left him, and heard him shortly after drive off.

And now for a few words on the pleasures of the day.

I will commence by passing over the dinner, which, like all other great dinners, was rather heavy. *Ma chère mère* was not in one of her most brilliant humours, and this affected us all; so now for the afternoon.

Mrs. Von P. had, at her entrance, given me only a gracious little nod of the head, and after this she concerned herself no farther with me; on the contrary, she was very friendly with Jane Maria.

Jane Maria played her heavy piece from Herz. It is her *cheval de bataille*, and that it is warlike one must acknowledge, as well as that it was performed excellently. The moment it was finished, Mrs. Von P. hastened to her, and exclaimed, "Charming! charming! None but our master composers can write thus. Oh! Weber is whimsical, Rossini often poor in melody; but Meyerbeer excels both; he is, as one may say, '*le prince de la musique*.'"

"The piece which I have just played," returned Jane Maria, somewhat dryly, "is from Herz."

"Yes, he is excellent! excellent!" repeated Mrs. Von P. "My dear Baroness, art it is alone which exalts man above brutes; education is the truest aristocracy, which equalizes all differences of rank and wealth among men. We live, truly, in an enlightened age."

"Ah, how pleasant it is to see you!" said the Misses Adèle and Julie, hastening up to Serena, and speaking with affected sprightliness, in fine ornamental voices. "How pleasant it is to see you, little Serena! How are you now, little Serena? Have you always now pain in your hip, poor little Serena?"

"I thank you, my good ones," said Serena, smiling, very quietly, "but it is above a year now since I had any pain."

"No, really!" answered one of them. "Heavens! I fancied you were always ill, you look so pale—but then that is the fault of your dress; what material is it? What! old-world Levantine! Heavens! you are quite old-fashioned, little Serena!"

"I am not just come from Paris," said Serena, with all that cheerful goodness which removed bitterness from her own heart, as well as from that of another. She then observed the dresses of the censorious young ladies, admired them, questioned them about Paris, and listened, with evident pleasure, to all that they could relate to her. Even these two sisters seemed to me to become agreeable while they conversed with Serena.

Cousin Stellan passed about from one to another; had at first a lively conversation with Miss Von P., which seemed soon to weary him; took tribute then of the brothers Stålmarm, who had sat themselves down in a corner of the room, with other gentlemen, to talk about dogs and horses; steered away then to several landed proprietors, who were talking over together the brandy monopoly. As he made his way from these, he was snapped up by Mrs. Von P., and, on account of his sins, was he doomed to hear her expatiate on art and education. At length he tore himself from her and made a halt by Serena, in whose graceful society he seemed to feel himself right.

In the mean time, I took a lesson from my friend Brita Kaisa on housewifery and maid-servants; but, perceiving myself sleepy therefrom, I sought out the patriarchs, with whom I endeavoured to accomplish my great work—the having Serena with me for fourteen days at Rosenvik; nor did it seem impossible that I should succeed. Long live eloquence!

Miss Hellevi Hausgiebel was prevented, by a previous engagement, from being at the great Carlsfors feast. This circumstance, *Ma chère mère's* serious humour, and the great heat without and within, caused there to be no particular life in the company.

When Serena had left, with her grand-parents, which was very early, it grew heavier and heavier; and I was glad when I was once more seated in the cabriolet by my own Lars Anders, on the way to our delightful Rosenvik.

19th.

Oh, the violent, hideous, cruel, detestable! you shall hear whom.

Cousin Stellan was gone yesterday afternoon into the city to pay a visit to the Dahls, and Lars Anders and I rejoiced to be alone. He had brought out his workbench; I had drawn my little worktable to the sofa, and just opened the third part of "The Watchtower in Koäven," which I was reading aloud. That book is to me horrible; the only good lesson which it seems to me people can derive from it is—I have skimmed it through to the end—to feel what a moral extravagance the life of many people and many things in this world would present, if we did not cast one glance to the solving of the great riddle, to the sequel of the history on the other side of the grave. For my part, I would gladly throw the book into the fire, but my husband insists on it that we should finish it. I fancy all the grailiness of the book gave him pleasure.

At the very moment, however, when I was

about to begin reading, I glanced through the window. The leaves of the elder-bushes whispered in the wind, the swans moved their white wings, collected softly towards the west, and it seemed to me as if all beckoned and whispered, "Come out! come out!" impelling me, with an indescribable desire, into the fresh air and greenness. I seized Bear by the ear, and whispered my wishes. He grumbled a little, stretched himself, and then, after a few moments, stood up and took his hat. The good Bear!

I soon put on my bonnet and shawl, and was ready to take his arm, but, the moment we were about to pass through the door, he looked around with a peculiar long glance, as if he had forgotten something, and I—for I know very well the meaning of his looks—sprang in immediately, took his pipe, filled it, struck fire, and lighted it myself, to his great delight.

He had a wish to go and look about in the park at Ramm. We procured a rowing, and very cool and pleasant was the sail across that peaceful lake. Bear puffed the long volumes of smoke from his pipe, I sang little barcaroles; and never noticing where we went, about a quarter of a mile on our backward way, struck upon the land by the shadowy shore of Ramm. We landed tolerably far from the house, and then, arm in arm, went into the beautiful, gloomy park. I felt myself happy to be wandering on Bear's arm in the still wood; to feel how the fresh, delicious air, played on my cheek; to know my husband to be so good, and the heaven above us so clear. Also he was happy to be wandering with his wife amid the remembrances of his childhood. He looked around him, breathed deeply, and said, in a low voice, while he pressed my arm to him, "How glorious!" And know, my Maria, if he says one word, it has more weight than a hundred out of the mouth of another.

So wandered we deeper and deeper into the wood. The high, thick-leaved trees; the shade, the silence, the recollections which seemed to abide under these shades, the loneliness, and the image of the gloomy hermit of Ramm; and Ramm itself, which stood there like the Genius of the place, all combined to produce in us a solemnity of mood. But, as we slowly wandered onward, we heard, at first dull, then more distinctly, a treading and stamping, as of a wild horse, which some one was endeavouring, but in vain, to master. I, for my part, have no great fancy for unbroken horses; but Lars Anders, on the contrary, must have had, for he hastened his steps towards the place from whence the noise proceeded. We advanced to an open space; and there making halt, were fascinated, as it were, by the wild, but fine spectacle.

The same man, and the same horse, which we had seen once before wandering together in such Ilyllian peace, we here beheld again; but now in violent contest. The man sat commandingly on the back of the horse, which he would compel to leap over a broad ditch. The beautiful creature trembled and backed. It threw itself to the left and to the right; it pawed, it would not take the leap; and the foam fell from its black and shining body. But, like an intrepid, despotic will, the man sat firm, admonishing, punishing, compelling.

The noble animal developed in this wild strife the whole beauty of his race. His eyes sparkled, his wide, outspread nostrils seemed to dart forth fire, while he struck the earth with his hoofs, and with a hundred leaps sought to escape

that one leap which he was urged to. The rider sat with unexampled skill, moved himself to the motions of the horse, and ever again was the refractory animal brought to the same spot. The same demand was made, and ever again began the same contest. Thus, certainly for a whole hour, did the two strive together. The horse then appeared weary, became still, but made no attempt to obey the will of his master. The blood ran down his spur-fretted sides; the man dismounted, and threw the bridle loose; the horse stood quiet, and looked at him; he took something from his breast-pocket, held it to the forehead of the horse. "It is the third time we have striven," said he, sullenly; "farewell!"

There was a flash before the horse, a shot was fired, and he fell dead at the feet of his master. We saw it stretch forth its head, when dying, as if for a caress; we heard a dull groan, and then all was still.

My husband pressed my arm to him with a violence which I had never seen before, struck his clinched fist to his brow, and, drawing back, exclaimed to himself, "It is Bruno! Lord, my God! yes, it is he!"

"It was Bruno!" repeated he again, as we re-entered the wood. "Where was I, that I did not sooner—but now he was so like himself—wild, unmanageably wild, at every opposition—and that expression of brow and mouth! Bruno alive! Bruno here!"

"I wish he were far enough from here," said I, fiercely. "He is a fearful man, and will murder us all, if we do not all the madresses which he will require from us."

I was violently agitated, and was obliged to sit down. Lars Anders, also, was pale, and repeated, with a mixture of disquiet, joy, and pain, "Bruno here again! Bruno! what will his mother say?"

"Ah! she will let him go again," said I. "I wish he were in Botany Bay, to which place he belongs."

"You should not wish so, Fanny," said my husband; "Bruno is not bad. He has his wild moments; but, if he be the least like what he was, he has also his good ones. Mildness and love may work an unknown effect upon him. His coming back alone, his residence here, speak volumes in favour of his heart," said the good Lars Anders, with more fervour than I had almost ever seen in him before.

"And what will now be done?" asked I, full of disquiet.

"He must be reconciled with his mother; he must remain among us," replied my husband.

"The bandit! the murderer!" I exclaimed.

"We shall see, we shall see!" said Lars Anders.

"We will go away from him, otherwise he will shoot us because we stand in his way," continued I. "Oh, let us go back to our peaceful little Rosenvik."

We did so; and it seemed to me as if I came from a tempestuous sea, so much was I disturbed and disquieted.

When we came back to our home, we—that is, Lars Anders and I—talked, backward and forward, of that which had happened, what could be done, and what would happen. He went, with his hands behind him, up and down the room, exclaiming, "Hum! hum!"

At length, we became unanimous that nothing farther was to be done than to keep the discovery which we had made secret, and await the time.

Lars Anders slept not a wink this night; neither did I till morning, when I slumbered, and dreamed that Bruno had struck a dagger into the heart of his mother. I heard her thrilling cry, "My blood! my own flesh and blood!" and then seemed to see her sink into a deep abyss. When I awoke, I was so agitated that I burst into tears; and yet once more must I give vent to my feelings, while, out of the depths of my heart, I exclaim, "Oh, the violent, cruel, abominable man!"

20th.

No, I cannot detest him yet. Bruno has a heart, although he is cruel to horses.

Yesterday evening he came to us, and my heart opposed itself against him, like a wild horse, and I could not speak a friendly word to him. The visit began with almost general silence; but I looked to Lars Anders, and I saw that this brother's heart yearned towards him, and I could not longer contain.

Cousin Stellan had just begun to read to us, aloud, a part out of "The Jew" of Spindler, which he admired as a masterpiece among works of horror. Bruno's arrival interrupted the reading, and a few moments afterward Stellan laid down the book. Bruno perceived this, and begged that, if we were engaged in reading, he might be permitted to be one of the auditors. Cousin Stellan, therefore, explained to him, shortly, of what this part of the book treated; said how the Jew, Zodik, had been baptized to a religion which he detested by criminal means, and through the cruellest act of power of a Christian knight, and then, on this very account, had been barbarously jested and sneered at by the knight himself; how, under these circumstances, the most terrible despair took possession of his soul; he felt himself cast out of heaven and earth.

"Every paradise is closed against me! Must I, then, be lost? Villanous Gojim! you have stolen my soul from me! I curse you! I vow revenge upon you! retribution! revenge!" These were the words with which Stellan had ceased to read, and he continued farther: "These thoughts animated the unhappy one, torn with doubt and despondency, with a spark which proceeded not from heaven, but from the deep. Zodik collected together his thoughts, and, with streaming hair, glared wildly up to the jagged clouds, which sent down in vain their thickest snow-flakes to cool that raging Moloch image. 'The bond is rent!' yelled he forth, the only living being under the still, icy rain. 'Samiel, prince of the wilderness,' continued he, 'prince of death, and consort of the horrible night—Queen Lilis, the mother of fearful ghosts and of all sins—to thee I resign myself! Defend me from the anger of our God! Conceal me from the wrath of Edom! Teach me to bear the sword against that law which is mine no longer! Permit me to take vengeance on Israel as well as on Esau, till thou takest home my soul in the tempest of thy wrath!'"

The narrative relates, farther, how Zodik hardened himself in hellish sentiments. He became calmer; he conceived that it was permitted, on earth, to the lost one, to live twofold, in his own joys and in the sufferings of others. He declared all men outlawed; and, drunken with a savage joy from the horrible pictures which ascended in his soul, he thanked Fate for the occasion which had lent him power to quench his thirst for revenge, and to become the enemy of the whole human race.

"That is horrible," said I, as Stellan ceased

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reading; "but is it natural? is it true? Is it not one of the terror-pictures which the romances of our age call forth, but which have no counterpart in reality? Crimes and criminals I can conceive, but not an odidrate man-hater—not a devil in a human form."

Cousin Stellan shrugged his shoulders. "At all events," said he, "the representation is successful, and full of effect."

"And precisely because it is quite natural, quite true," said Bruno, emphatically; "the sinner must become a devil, who has no hope."

"And who need be without hope?" asked Lars Anders, with the confidence which becomes a pure heart so well. "Who can, who, indeed, need live without hope?"

"Can you," inquired Bruno, in a tone of reproach, "cast the burden of remorse or of pain from a human breast, so that it may open itself to hope? Can you prevent passion from shattering and imbitting? To hope! Then take out of the world punishment ten times harder than the crime deserves—then take away words from the soul, which, once spoken, burn there forever!"

Stellan here was called out by the Brothers Stålmarm, who, in hunting-dress, and followed by a pack of dogs, crossed the court. He was, or, rather, he wished to be, athirst for the chase, and left us. Thus he did not hear how I, burning in soul against Bruno, on account of his horse and various other causes, answered him somewhat bitterly.

"If you remove haughtiness, if you remove anger and evil passions out of the soul of man, then you will see that punishment improves, and that misfortune purifies, and leads to humility and hope."

"Punishment!" exclaimed Bruno, with mournful warmth; "believe me, there are sins which punishment cannot reform—there are natures whom severity only hardens. They plunge themselves only deeper upon the sword which is sheathed in their breast. Would you save a criminal of this kind from eternal perdition—would you change the heart in his breast, reach to him the hand of love; forgive him, even if he do not deserve forgiveness; but repel him not, cast him not off! A heart may vibrate long between good and evil—it may be long before it can be saved—but the hour comes. If," continued he, "the only bosom after which it longs in the world closes itself against him, then is every paradise of life closed against him! If one horrible, unappeasable remembrance comes, and comes again, forever, night and day, falls upon the soul every moment, like an ice-shower, then—bitter, bitter!"

Bruno supported his forehead on his hand; he seemed to have forgotten us, and everything around him; the thunderbolt upon his forehead was spread out in sharp angles. After a few moments, he looked up, again, and resumed: "And under such circumstances, shall a man reform himself, become good, and hope?" He laughed bitterly. "Ah, you good, happy people," said he, "go out into the world; visit the prisons, the galleys; look into those hearts which wear heavier fetters than their bodies, and talk to them of reform! There are furies in life, in hearts—the legends of them in the olden times are no invention; go out to those who are driven by the Furies, and preach of hope, if you have courage to do so!"

"Yes, the thousand!" cried Lars Anders,

stamping on the floor as if in anger, although his eyes were full of tears; "yes, I will preach of hope, and this in prisons, by land, and on sea. I will cry it in the ear of the dying malefactor, will shout it, even to the other side of death, to the other side of the grave—I will cry into endless eternity, 'Hope ye! hope ye!'"

"He undertakes something," thought I to myself; "yet, nevertheless, he is right!" and I rejoiced over my husband.

"Would you," said Bruno, slowly, his cheek blanching, while he supported his head with his hand, "would you also talk of hope to those who sustained the curse of father or mother? and who had deserved it?" added he, with an almost inarticulate voice.

"Yes, in the name of all the world!" cried Lars Anders, vehemently; "and wherefore," continued he, in a tone and with a manner which wholly perplexed me, "wherefore this doubt, and this Jeremiad, and these lamentable despairings, in a man and in a Christian? Why are you come to disturb us with these things?"

The blood mounted into Bruno's face; he cast an inquiring glance on his brother, who, looking quite ferocious and exasperated, continued, "I acknowledge that it seems to me quite extraordinary that you come here as a stranger into my peaceful house, to disturb our quiet with your speeches about prisons, galleys, Furies, and all kinds of hateful disputations."

Bruno, astonished, wounded, and proud, stood up and cast upon Lars Anders his wonderful penetrating and flashing eyes; then sinking them again, he said, in a voice which expressed both repressed pain and anger, "Have I disturbed your peace? I will not disturb it again! Farewell!" and bowing to me, he moved towards the door, his brother following, and still continuing,

"Yes, it appears to me quite extraordinary, inexplicable, and unpardonable, that you come as a stranger, and talk of despair, and irremediable misfortune; of repulsion, and that in—" and here he laid his hand on Bruno's arm, as, turning himself in the door, he cast upon him a look in which all the lightnings of the world seemed agitating his soul—"and that," said Lars Anders, "in the house of a brother, which is your own house also, and before a friend who will do all for you, for Bruno! Yes, it is unpardonable!" and with these words he held him in his arms, and pressed him to his honest breast.

The storm dissolved away in tears of love; Bruno was almost beside himself; the colour changed in his countenance, with a thousand contending emotions; at last all lost themselves in a sentiment of overwhelming tenderness. He pressed his brother warmly to his breast, kissed him, embraced him again, stammering out, "Brother! brother! Lars Anders! can you yet remember me? Will you acknowledge me, and love me as before?"

"Silence!" cried Lars Anders, almost inarticulate with emotion; "silence with your stupid questions! Come, here is my wife, we both are one, embrace her!"

I confess that the image of the dying horse quite vanished out of my mind. I sat there and wept at the embracing of the brothers, and, when Bruno approached me, I presented to him my cheek. He kissed my hand also, and embraced Lars Anders again; a warm, loving heart glanced from his eyes, and from his whole being. I loved him truly at this moment.

We had scarcely begun in some measure to

compose ourselves, when we heard Cousin Stellan returning. "Secret!" said Bruno, in a low emphatic voice, and again we seated ourselves, as quietly, and with as much indifference as possible.

After Stellan's entrance, Bruno remained for a long time silent; at length said he, "One of my people at Ramm is dangerously ill; could I beg you, Dr. Werner, to visit him? I should prefer this evening, or perhaps to-morrow."

"I should prefer this evening," returned Lars Anders; "the earlier the better, before it be too late."

They made themselves, therefore, immediately ready to depart; and, as my husband took leave, he whispered to me to be quite easy, even if he did not return till late at night.

I remained alone with Stellan; but it is possible that he found me the most wearisome companion in the world, for my thoughts were far from him; and although he spoke much of Serena, I remained silent and absent.

Lars Anders did not return home till past midnight, and then he told me what follows.

It appears from Bruno's papers, as well as from his own account, that he served some time in the Portuguese war. After the conclusion of the peace, he took his leave, and voyaged to the West Indies, where, in partnership with a planter, he amassed his fortune by trade. He became rich; passed many years partly in the plantations, and partly in active life, and in travelling; but a longing after his native land, and the desire to be reconciled to his mother, possessed ever and ever his soul more strongly, till, at last, life lost all worth for him. At length, he determined to make the attempt, whether or not he could free himself from the curse which pursued him like Furies, and thus, under an assumed name, he had travelled to Sweden, and even came to Ramm. Here he obtained intelligence of his mother's state of mind, learned her condition after his flight, and how, since then, she had removed from about her all remembrances of him, and that she was still unable to hear his name spoken; and, with all this, the wildest despair had taken hold of him. It appeared to torture him to speak on the subject, and he interrupted himself with the words, "Nevertheless, an attempt must be made—when, I know not. Let us now speak no more about it!"

If this attempt succeed, he will bring his great wealth to Sweden, purchase Ramm, and settle himself down there; if not, he will, he says, return to the West Indies, and become as one dead to family and fatherland.

So stands the affair; how will it go on? "Hope!" Lars Anders said to his brother; but still his knowledge of the character both of mother and son made him uneasy as to the result; yet, after all, he rejoices in his soul over the return of his brother, and, moreover, that he has found his heart to be as warm as ever.

"But did you say nothing to him about the horse?" asked I. "Certainly I did," he replied, "since I told him where, and by what means, I had recognised him." Bruno coloured deeply at hearing this, and said, "That was an unfortunate hour; I had resolved to make this very leap a prophesying of the result of my fate. I would that it should be taken; but, as the opposition could not be overcome, I was imbibited; and now what I have done distresses me!"

"He is at least a man," exclaimed I, "although not a reasonable one!"

Ah, my good Maria! what will be the end of this? A ferocious, unreasonable son; an inflexible mother, who also has sparks of ferocity in her soul; and between them both such remembrances!

Lars Anders himself, who talks so much about hope, appears himself not to be without fears. God help us all!

FRANZISKA.

CHAPTER VIII.

Rosenvik, July 29th.

I HAVE been for several days so busy, so cheerful, so happy, that I have nearly forgotten disquiet, anxiety, the threatening future, and, pardon me, my dear Maria, almost the pen itself. I have lived so much in the present, and have so fully enjoyed it! I have had, and still have, Serena with me; my plans have succeeded. I tyrannised over Lars Anders; he tyrannised over the patriarchs; and I received Serena with the permission to retain her with me a whole week, and perhaps longer.

How joyful was I the evening she came! It was to me as if I had received into my house a beloved younger sister, to whom I should be as a mother. How happy was I to set before her of my eggs, my butter, my fresh-baked *roggen* bread, and to spread on her bed, in the evening, the dazzlingly white linen! We rose early in the morning; drank milk from Audumbia; went then into the birch-wood, where Lars Anders has made winding walks, so that it has the effect of a pleasure-ground. I have enjoyed, with her, air and flowers, and have seen her every day become healthier and lovelier. We have read together, worked together, sung together, and talked together, and all possesses with Serena a new and higher charm.

Wednesday evening was a tea and coffee party at Bird's Nest; a little festival, lively and gay as the hostess herself, and where body and soul are equally entertained—it is a charming thing to possess a museum.

On Friday it went festively at Doctor Werner's. Rosenvik cannot compare itself with Bird's Nest; but it still has, as *Ma chère mère* was pleased to assert of its mistress, its own little charm. As this was our first great party, I was a little uneasy about it, whether everything would go on quite well, and as it should do, especially on Lars Anders's account; for I wish him always to be satisfied with his wife.

Fortunately, everything did succeed properly; the only misfortune was, that a few days before I had said to my husband that, in this festival, he should be treated to a sort of little sugar-cake, which would melt in his mouth. Unluckily, they all melted away in the oven, so that there was not the least morsel of them left to eat. For the rest, all went well, and our visitors were politely contented with all. I sang a little, and then everybody danced to the piano; all were cheerful.

When our company was gone, Bear and I walked up and down the room, and rejoiced ourselves that all had gone off so well, and that people had found it so agreeable with us.

"And how good everybody found the lemonade!" said I.

"And then the little sugar-cakes!" exclaimed he, smacking his lips; "they really melted in one's mouth, so that we perceived nothing of them!"

"Unlucky little sugar-cakes!"

The happiest and pleasantest days, however, we have spent alone at Rosenvik; and then, every evening almost, we eat our supper on Svanå. Stellan is *aux petits soins* for Serena! Now, now, Cousin Stellan!"

We spent several evenings at Carlsfors. *Ma chère mère*, since her misfortunes, accepts no invitations. She is very friendly and kind to me, and addresses me, almost always, with *thou* and *child*; and, when the understanding between us is very good, I call her *mother*, which seems to give her pleasure; but confidence does not exist between us, and that *Berlichingenism* somewhat shocks me.

On Saturday, Ebba leaves with her husband. I am sorry for it. I have won her affection latterly, and she has ingratiated herself with me; there is a deal which is naturally good in her, and, with a prudent management on Peter's part, it would develop itself still more. The tears she shed at parting proved that I was not indifferent to her, and we promised to write to each other.

2d August.

Serena remains with me yet fourteen days longer! The good old Dahls came here yesterday. It was a joy to see how Serena flew into their arms, and how they embraced her in sincere affection. They rejoiced to see her blooming cheeks; to hear her progress in singing (I pride myself on being the very best of aunts!); and they themselves persuaded the sweet girl to fall in with Lars Anders's commands, and my sincere wishes. She seemed to find it difficult to leave the old people; but consented, at last, to the prayers of all; and so I have yet fourteen happy days more.

Between Jane Maria and me all is again harmonious. It is always a pleasure to me to converse with her, and her musical talent is truly uncommon. She appears to me, also, to be much more agreeable since Ebba has left; the intercourse between these two could never be friendly. It is with certain persons as with certain stuffs, each taken by itself is very good; but, when the two come together, they put each other out, as it were; they lose mutually in colour. Jane Maria also becomes more polite towards *Ma chère mère*, who, on her side, becomes more friendly to her, although she always keeps her at a certain distance, especially in housekeeping affairs.

Jane Maria has unquestionable merits as a wife, and she and Jean Jacques are exceedingly well satisfied with each other.

Till now, I have only given you sunshine; now comes a cloud; this is called Bruno. Bruno is often here in an evening. I know not why, or from what cause, but I am always anxious when he comes here; it seems to me as if an evil power dwelt in him, as if he in some way or other would occasion misfortune. The warm sunbeams, which seemed to break forth from him as he saw himself acknowledged and embraced by his brother, have now vanished. The tempest-nature has again the upper hand, and he is reserved and gloomy; yet this extraordinary man has a mysterious influence over us all. I fear that Serena feels it deeper than I should wish, although I cannot say that decidedly. Bruno, on the contrary, seems to be evidently captivated by her. He observes her; he listens to all that she says, as people listen to music of which they will not lose one tone. Serena is kind and friendly to him, but so is she also

to Stellan. To whom, indeed, is she not so? But then I fancy that I have seen, at times, a certain timidity towards Bruno, which, in her intercourse with Stellan, I never perceived; and this is not a good sign. But perhaps this may be only a natural consequence of the dissimilar nature and dissimilar behaviour of these two men; even I in Bruno's company am not quite self-possessed. Neither of the two exactly pleases me as a husband for Serana; but Stellan I prefer to Bruno.

5th August.

Aha! Cousin Stellan, is it so? What do you think now, dear Maria? Here, now, has our former despiser of marriages sat a whole hour, and talked of the happiness of a well-assorted marriage, and of the pleasures and joys which domestic life must afford; then came sighs and melancholy looks, and it was to be understood that he held it for the highest happiness to settle down domestically with an amiable and accomplished wife; and I—I threw all his former difficulties in the way.

"But, Cousin Stellan, the sour paste? But, Cousin Stellan, the wash-bucket? Your wife must have the house scoured! But, Cousin Stellan, that crying of children? All little children cry, even if they be descended from the best-educated parents. And that apple, which is found in all families!" To all these Stellan had one answer, that all earthly disagreeables, with a really prudent and agreeable wife, would be perceived only as a light cloud, which appears transiently in the heavens, and then is gone again. I cherished the same opinion exactly, and said so, at length.

"Yes," said Stellan, "one first becomes perfectly aware of this when one meets with a person who gives, by her beautiful, harmonious nature, a charm and grace to all that surrounds her. One feels, then, first that they are the intrinsic qualities which fashion this outer world, and that the connexion between the two is governed by them."

"Yes, so it is, Cousin Stellan," said I; "and I confess that I have anticipated this change in your views."

"How so?" asked he, blushing.

"Confess," said I, "that a person in our neighbourhood has particularly tended to your seeing marriage and domestic life in a brighter point of view."

"Hum! yes, now, I cannot deny that," said he.

"I have seen it long," I observed. "I am not astonished, Cousin Stellan; you have not seen coolly Miss Hellevi Hausgiebel and her Bird's Nest."

"What! whom? how?" said Cousin Stellan, springing up in confusion, and looking at me with terror; "you jest, Franziska, and that is not right of you!"

"Pardon me, Stellan," I replied, "but confess that Bird's Nest possesses not the least of these disagreeables which you find so great; it never can smell there of sour paste, and certainly it is not scoured more than once a year; besides which, Miss Hellevi is a person with whom life could never be heavy and wearisome."

"God defend us!" exclaimed he; "her excessive sprightliness would occasion me fever, and in eight days I should die of Bird's Nest and phrensy; and then she would embalm me, and, over and above, would most likely be glad of me for a mummy for her museum. I thank you, Franziska! no, look in another direction."

"That I have done already, Cousin Stellan," I replied; "but then a great *but* comes in my way. This person is excellent, but then—she limps."

"The beautiful and renowned La Valliere," said he, "was also lame in the hip."

"Ah! that is true, and alters the affair considerably (for our court people)," added I, *in petto*.

"But she seems to me," continued he, "to have a far greater fault, a fault which is very objectionable in a woman."

"God forbid! And this fault?" asked I.

"She appears to me," said he, "to have a cold heart; she has a repose in her nature which borders on indifference. This is a great fault in a lady."

"You surprise me, Stellan," said I. "I have never observed any coldness in Serena."

"I believe still that it is so," he replied; "but I should be glad to find that I was wrong, for she really is an excellent creature—but," added he, in a light and totally indifferent tone, "icy natures are, to the last, cold;" and, with these words, he went out.

Ah, Cousin Stellan, you are subtle, but your fox will not catch my goose. I see very well how it is; Stellan wishes that I should examine Serena's heart, and then that I should tell him whether it is warm or cold towards him. In the first case, he then would advance securely; in the last, he would withdraw himself, and that on the plea of "that great fault in a lady," and thus would compromise neither his comfort nor his consequence. But does a man truly love when he is thus circumspect? At all events, it will be interesting to see how the sour paste all at once can become sweet; and I will, without doubt, take the opportunity of discovering whether Serena's heart be warm or cold towards my handsome cousin. It is another thing whether I shall or shall not impart to him my discoveries.

6th August.

Now I know what hour the clock has struck, and you shall know it also, my Maria. Oh, Serena! Serena!

I was alone with her yesterday afternoon; and, thinking of Stellan, I asked her what she thought of our young guest. To my astonishment, I found that she had thought very little about him. She allowed that he was handsome, graceful, and full of talent; but she expressed her admiration with a desperate indifference. At this, I began to be a little scandalized. Love, thought I, has many lurking-holes; and when we cannot decoy him out with sugar, one often can with salt; but in vain did I salt my observations in Stellan's care for self, his levity, &c. I could not discover the least point out of the quiver of love. Serena, while she acknowledged his faults, excused them, like Christian Charity herself.

"You are very gentle towards him, Serena," said I; "would you not undertake his education, for example, as his wife?"

"Ah, no, no!" replied she, laughing.

"And why? Ah, no, no?" returned I. "You acknowledge, truly, that he possesses very many good qualities, and excuse his faults with all zeal."

"Yes; but I could not think of him as my husband," she replied.

"And why not, Serena?"

"What shall I say?" returned she. "He seems to be good and agreeable, but I do not believe that he could really love any other person or any other thing than himself."

"You would rather have my Bear, then, Serena?" asked I.

"He, who is so good to every one—who has so warm a heart—who is so active for others—Oh, yes!" said she, warmly.

"It is well," said I, "that I have him in secure possession. But tell me, dear Serena, and pardon me; is there no other who stands in Stellan's way? or I really think you must have felt a little warmer interest for him. Perhaps your heart is already disposed of. I have been told of a youth who, a few years since, asked your hand."

Serena blushed deeply at the beginning of my question, then became pale, and answered, after some reflection, "No, I did not love him; but, had I been able to have acted quite freely, it is probable I should have become his wife."

"And wherefore, if you did not love him?"

"Because," said she, "I believe that he really loved me, and that I could have made him happy. There is something beautiful in being able, on earth, to make one human being happy."

"But you have had many lovers," remarked I. "Did none of them please your parents, or had you not the same compassion on these as on the one you have just mentioned?"

"They did not need it," said she, smiling.

"How so? they really loved you?"

"Oh! there are many kinds of love," replied she.

"That is true," I returned; "let us see. In the first place we will set down the moderate lover, who speaks probably thus: 'See, there is a good, rational girl, who will make a regular housekeeper, and not occasion me too much expense, and would be exactly the wife for me.' What lover shall we place second?"

"Perhaps the enamoured," said Serena.

"Yes, certainly," assented I: "the enamoured, who has a bandage before his eyes, and becomes enchanted over head and ears. This love may be violent as a spring-storm, or modest as a violet, but it is past as soon as these; yet this love can, as well as the moderate love, elevate itself to one more inward, and may become nearly related to a sort of love for which I have great esteem—I mean, warm friendship."

"Ah, that is beautiful!" said Serena. "It develops itself first perfectly during marriage itself, and I have often heard in my family how it speaks more in deeds than in words."

"Tell me that, dear Serena," I said, "since I will gladly introduce this language into my house."

Had a man stood before Serena at this moment, he must have thrown himself at her feet, so charming and amiable was she, as she said, "Thy well-being is mine; my well-being thine. Let misfortune do its worst, it cannot make me unhappy, possessing thee. If I have erred, or, if I have acted well, I read it in thy eyes; that is my punishment, this is my reward. Whither should I go with my joy, or with my sorrow, if not to thee? and where shouldst thou go, if not to me? All that we have, have we not it together? If thou art in any respect wanting, if thou art sometimes even unjust, what does that amount to? I enclose thee in my inmost heart, and then we love only the more. I have, by thy side, support, and home, and joy; in the whole wide world, there is no one who understands me so well as thou."

"But what could love say more than this?" exclaimed I, wiping away a tear; "what more could the highest love say than this?"

"The highest love?" repeated Serena, while

a mild paleness chased the crimson from her cheek: "what it would say I know not, but I imagine what it must feel—it is a higher throb in the veins of friendship—it is the heavenly life—" She paused, her eyes filled with tears, and a glance full of exultation completed the thought which the tongue was unable to speak.

"And will you, Serena," said I, after a few moments, "who understand the highest happiness of marriage so well, never enjoy it—will you remain single?"

"I think so," answered she, again calm; "but yet I will love thus sincerely my parents, you, all good people; and through this will I become happy."

"My dear Serena," said I, "that is very well, so long as your heart remains free."

A thrill, a tremble, passed through the fine, warm hand which I held in mine; it was as if a heart-throb had thrilled through her veins, and when I looked at her, her cheeks were flushed with red, and she breathed quicker. The moment I was about to inquire whence came this sudden emotion, I made a painful discovery: the quick strokes of a horse's hoofs were heard, and Bruno dismounted at the door; Serena must have already recognised from afar the sound of his horse's approach.

"Is it so?" thought I, and a light, anxious shudder passed through me, like an unfortunate foreboding. I pressed Serena's hand, and felt as if impelled to embrace her, and clasp her more warmly to me; but this I was prevented doing by Bruno's noisy entrance. He always comes in like a tempest; but he now shook my hand so cordially, and threw so beautiful a glance on Serena, that the unpleasant sensation which I experienced the moment before vanished.

Serena sat down to her embroidery-frame and worked industriously, while Bruno's eyes rested on the figures, and on the flowers, which seemed to spring from them.

"It is a lovely day," said I to Bruno.

"Yes," replied he, in his melodious voice; "but I feel it to be so now for the first time."

We were silent for long; and I was glad when the entrance of Lars Anders converted our trio into a quartett, and soon after, when it became a quintett, through the entrance of Stellan.

But this did not seem to please Bruno. He arose, and, after he had paced the room a few times, he sat himself down to the piano at the other end; and then, like painfully-repressed feelings, sounded forth the low expression of his extraordinary and thoughtful melodies. Serena seemed to dream; she attended not to our conversation, nor, in fact, seemed aware of it, till we began to speak of the approaching golden nuptials of her grand-parents.

"It must be beautiful," said I with warmth, "on such a day, to glance back through a long array of years, and discover only pure recollections and good deeds."

Bruno moved; the tones ceased; and, leaning himself over the chair, I saw that he listened.

"Such a happiness is the lot of but very few mortals," said Stellan, with a sigh.

"And why, Cousin Stellan?" began I again: "because so few aim at it; so few learn to know and to govern themselves."

"And who knows himself? who can do it?" asked Bruno, rising from his seat.

"Hem! I hope I can!" answered I, somewhat startled by the eager interruption.

"Yes, people think so," continued he, with a gloomy warmth; "people think they know them-

selves, because they are untried, because they have never examined down into the depths of the soul. Our connexions make the path smooth; life goes on like a sunshiny day; and the undisturbed spirit, which no storm has shaken, no night darkened, regards itself as firm as light. The blind ones! The lucky ones! They know little of life. But who that has proved how much life has of temptation, afflictions, and joys; who that feels his soul shaken by passions, would dare to say that he can regulate himself as he would? And who is always the same? Look into history: do not vice and misery pollute the lives of the greatest men? Cannot the malefactor accomplish noble actions? Cannot man, in one hour of his life, possess in his heart a paradise of love, and, in another, is it not cold, poor, and desolate? To know himself! Is not that to feel himself a mass of contradiction of all possible kinds? as a toy between heaven and hell, with which angels and devils disport themselves? Man can do much without consistency; he can do the greatest, the noblest actions one moment—the next moment drags him downward! To know himself is but to know his own weakness!"

Bruno's speech had rushed onward like an impetuous stream, which suddenly rises above the shore, and breaks through all impediments; and I confess that I myself felt overwhelmed by it. In my own so often changeable and sensitive heart, a hundred evidences arose to the truth of Bruno's sorrowful doctrine. I felt my courage sink, but Serena had not let go the rudder. She fixed her clear eyes on Bruno, who stood over against her, and said, with all her peculiarly sincere and consolatory gentleness, "Certainly, there are contradictions and inconsistencies in all men; but must not one concede that these diminish in the same proportion as they are repressed?"

"It should be so," said Bruno, slowly fixing his eyes on her heaven-serene countenance.

"And do we not see," continued she, "in manifold examples, that such ennobling takes place? Do we not know that fallen human beings have created themselves again? that the severely tried have come out of the contest as victors? Every man carries in his breast a secret image of God, which can enlighten his being, and which strives to exalt him to a higher existence."

"Yes, it is so; I believe it!" said Bruno, mildly, though gloomily, and seated himself beside her.

"Let us, then, hope for all," continued she, with heartfelt emotion; "the way may be more difficult for some natures than for others, but He, who is bright, and good, and eternally consistent, will some time let his voice be heard, and will raise them to light and harmony."

"Amen! Amen! so be it!" said Bruno, resting his forehead on his hand. "May all the restless spirits receive peace!"

"Before all things goes a good-will," thought I; but I would not raise my voice, after Serena's angel-tones, even to speak words of wisdom.

We sat long silent, each one busied with his own thoughts. The silence at length dissolved itself into Mozart's Don Juan, which Stellan proposed; and Bruno, who conducted it, added thereto somewhat of his own powerful inspiration. He truly captivated me this evening, and I fancy all the rest were as much charmed as I. We scarcely left ourselves time to eat, but continued our music, almost uninterruptedly, till nearly eleven. Godlike art! Glorious Mozart!

We were all become such good friends through this heavenly music, that, when Bruno left us, we accompanied him part way home. The air was mild, and the starry heaven was displayed in streaming glory in the deep midnight twilight of August. Involuntarily we looked up in quiet admiration; and Stellan, who for the last several days has seemed to feel all with deeper sentiment, said, "Under such a heaven as this, man must for the first time have divined of his own immortality!"

"Or rather, perhaps," objected Bruno, "comprehended his own mortality; his independence of all outward powers. Since what say you to this multitude of stars, these eternal wanderers, on eternally the same paths, who pursue their heavenly career as silently as so many Trappists? Strangers to our feelings, our sufferings, and our joys, they circle in eternal rest, and seem to answer only to our questions, 'Poor Dust, measure thyself with Immortality, and be mute! Immortal life! no, this magnificent thought was never created to us out of those unfeeling heights. The starry heaven rather distresses than elevates us! But the world of sound! Cannot we involve ourselves in this, and divine, at least for a moment, the greatness of life, and conceive of its harmony and its eternity? Oh (and Bruno's voice here assumed its deep melodious tone), Oh, if there be one great thought in this universe, in this life which we lead, it must be expressed in sound! Listen to the fugue! Listen how spheres sing to sphere! how one thought answers another! how all things are manifold, yet one thought has perfected this manifold whole in strength and beauty! The fugue is that 'Let it be!' of the Creator. Thus innumerable worlds repeat that first word! Listen to a symphony of Beethoven, if you would have an interpretation of life! Listen to the tones, how they live, suffer, love; how they involve one another, and thus fashion out all the melodies of being! Listen, at last, how the dissonances dissolve themselves into harmonies; how storm, unrest, affliction, joy, hate, and love, hasten forward, like the rivers of the earth, to cast themselves into the ocean, where all is dissolved in an accord of harmony and peace!"

I was agitated and carried away, although not satisfied by Bruno's words.

We went slowly down the long alley, Stellan talking with me; and I fancy that all at once I must have become possessed of two pairs of eyes and two pairs of ears, for, while I replied to him, I was observant also of what went on between Bruno and Serena, who walked on together a few paces before us. Bruno gathered a flower, which he presented to Serena, saying, in a low voice, in which was something inexpressibly mild and tender, "Flowers and good wishes may truly be given at the same time; will you accept them from me! May you always be as peaceful as now! May your bitterest cares resemble this night, full of heavenly lights! May you be as happy as you are good and pure! But," and here his voice sunk deeper, "when you are sustained by the hands of good angels, then pray for those who have no rest—who are not so pure as you—pray for them, and—pray for me!" These last words I imagined rather than heard. Bruno bent himself at that moment over Serena's hand, and Stellan began, also, as I suspect, to have two pairs of eyes and two pairs of ears.

Serena's face was turned towards Bruno, but I could not perceive whether she answered him.

Bruno's horse was then led up; he took a hasty leave of us, and vanished out of our sight.

Bruno! one can neither get on well with him, nor can one preserve rest with him. Yet it is precisely those contradictions in him—this quick change between snow and thaw, storm and rest, night and sudden day—this fulness of life and warmth, which lends him at the same moment a restless and powerful interest. He repels and attracts, particularly the latter, because he is so perfectly natural.

But I am very uneasy, because Serena is so much inclined towards him. What can the white lily do with the stormy wave? Can Bruno make a wife happy? deserves he such a wife? Think, if he himself should be the criminal whose part he takes! What is he? what will he do? Thus I question myself—thus I question my husband, who, however, always thinks the best, and loves his brother truly; still he cannot perfectly console me. I have anxious forebodings, and the heart, which is heavy from these, says to you, for the present—farewell!

CHAPTER IX.

Rosenvik, August 14th.

Four days have passed since I last wrote to you, my Maria. I forgot that I ought to write for the sake of the romance which I have undertaken; but the necessity to live in some measure with you led me again to the pen and to the narrative.

Stellan has left us. He must have been more and more convinced that Serena had that fault which he considered the most unpardonable in a lady; a strong desire for yawning, too, always came over him whenever Bruno came to Rosenvik; and as he received letters from Stockholm, which required him to go there, on account of important money matters, he journeyed home, accompanied by my most sincere good wishes; yet I was sorry that the reform of his notions was stopped exactly in the beginning.

But Serena and Bruno have occupied me so much that I have had less thought for others than for them. Bruno has made our house his. My husband sees it with joy; and I, though I am so uneasy, cannot be indifferent to this remarkable man. Serena lives, as it were, under an unsuspected enchantment, and—what think you? I have never ventured to interrupt it with one word. She appears so happy, so joyous, so inwardly secure, that I fear to say one word that might disturb, or perhaps wake, a half-slumbering feeling into consciousness. Beyond this, she unfolds into more beautiful life; her voice has developed the most delicious tones; but Bruno is quite a different teacher from me; never has her countenance, her whole being, been more attractive than now. And Bruno! He is quiet, but one can see that he is altogether absorbed by her. He follows her wherever she goes; he sits by her; sometimes he fixes upon her one of those glances which are never without their effect in the eye of a man—but then this glance from him! Still he does not please me; at times he makes me tremble.

It is said that, when the snake will make the lark his prey, he raises himself and fixes his glance upon her; the lark sees the eye of the snake, and a wonderful and horrible magic seizes upon her. Fluttering on her pinions, she flies circling round and round; yet never was her song

so ravishing, nor fluttered her wings in stronger enjoyment of life, than then—and so she sings, and so she circles around the snake ever nearer and nearer, till she sinks into his jaws—and is silent forever!

Oh, Serena! Serena!

In fact, it will not do to let it proceed thus; she must know what we know of this dangerous man. I must speak with Lars Anders.

Later.

See here our conversation.

"But, my dear husband, it will not do; I assure you something serious will come of it."

"Well, and what then? What can one desire better? I wish that it was so serious as to come to marriage. I believe, truly, that these two would accord well for each other?"

"But is he worthy of such a wife? How do we know but he may have done something much worse than what we know he did in his youth? There is something in Bruno that prejudices me against him. I do not trust him; I believe, at times, that he is capable of the very worst—only think, if he be a murderer!"

"My dear Franziska," said my husband, almost angry, "why do you let your imagination run away with you so? Why, without any occasion, can you think thus of any fellow-creature? You are unreasonable now, Franziska!"

"Pardon me, angel!" said I, "but you—are not you too mild? No occasion? We know very well that he has stolen."

"And did you never steal—as a child?" asked he.

I paused—bethought me—blushed, and was silent; for, out of my innocent childish years, rose, spectre-like, a host of biscuits, confections, pieces of riband, and such like, as witnesses against me. "Yes, Bear," said I, "I have stolen—I confess it—but at fifteen I stole not."

"Remember," remonstrated he, "the circumstances under which Bruno grew up. Most children fail a little; but a good education, a discreet management, stifles that dangerous, yet natural impulse to appropriate that to one's self for which one has desire. Bruno was unskillfully trained, and must be judged accordingly. At all events, the last lines he wrote to me testify that he acknowledged his fault, and would abandon it; and, undoubtedly, the fearful lesson he had at the last scene with his mother would deter him forever from this course."

"At all events, we have seen," said I, with a sigh, "that he can shoot down that which refuses to obey him. He, who can act so barbarously towards a horse, can do so also towards men."

"There is a striking difference, Fanny," returned my husband. "I will on no account excuse Bruno's error—yes, he is wild, and at times ferocious and violent; but he himself, in his youth, although he was not steady, was not bad. On the contrary, his heart is warm, and I am convinced that he will become good. It is precisely an angel like Serena which can obtain influence over him, and make him good and reasonable, at the same time she makes him happy."

"My good Bear," said I, "you talk beautifully, but yet I am not satisfied. Should we not, at least, acquaint Serena with the person to whom she so blindly resigns herself? Should she not know all that we know of his youth and his after adventures?"

"Why? and to what purpose?" inquired he. "If she loves him, this will not withdraw her from him; but, as his wife, it might be painful for her

to know that Bruno had deserved the contempt of his nearest connexions. At least, none but Bruno himself should put her in possession of this knowledge. Eye to eye, heart to heart, can say much, and reconcile much."

"Ah! if one only knew something more of Bruno's later life!" sighed I.

"I have heard his relation," returned he: "I have, indeed, seen his papers; all is clear and straightforward. I have seen letters from many distinguished men to him; they speak perfectly to his advantage; beyond this, even if Bruno should have erred, do we not see clearly in him the desire after good? Christ would not reject him—and thou, Fanny, couldst not do it!"

"Ah, no, no, dearest! But Serena—"

"Think on Bruno's warm heart," interrupted he, "on his great talents, on his mind, and then—on his great wealth! Why should not Serena be happy with him?"

"Ah, Bear," returned I, "that which makes a wife happy—what beautifies home—is not the wealth of a husband—not his great talents—not the fire of his soul—all these may destroy the peace of home. No, the happiness of the wife is that the husband have integrity; that he be good, rational, reasonable, and regular—like you, Bear!"

We did not contend any longer.

CHAPTER X.

FRAGMENT OF A LETTER FROM BRUNO M— TO ANTONIO DE R—.

... I approached her without purpose. I would merely contemplate the beauty of her countenance, the glory of innocence which rested upon it like a clear heaven. I would merely listen to her voice, her words; observe all her living grace. What the freshness of the waves, what the tune of a song, what the endearments of my mother, had been to me—that was to me her presence. I felt happy as I heard her voice; at her glance, every painful feeling, every unholy thought, withdrew; I was better.

Neither she nor I, but the power which planted volcanic fire in the depths of my being, is the cause that this feeling suddenly grew into a devouring flame. But I love her not, if I ever loved before. No, Serena stood on my nightly way—she is my first pure love. And precisely on that account, exactly because she is totally dissimilar to all other women whom I have hitherto sought and won, is it that Serena is so bewitching. Her gentle and maidenly worth, which stamps her being and actions with so beautiful a propriety, binds me to her with the force of magic. Exactly because she is so destitute of everything like coquetry, am I ready to kneel before her, and to worship her. My eyes rest with an indescribable rapture on this mouth, which no heartless kiss has desecrated, no word of scorn or of falsehood has polluted. Purity—a word which I have too late learned to understand—purity is the heaven which beams upon her brow, the spirit which emanates from her; and, for the sake of her purity, I worship her. I, who—Yes, I can do it, and that is my salvation. What is beautiful, what is godlike, which, at the same time, is not pure? Light, virtue, heaven! eternal essence of purity! Dark was my life, but in her I love you! Serena stands there, and with her all the angels of life; they whom I have dishonoured and despised—quiet virtues, peace, domestic life

—social ties which I have renounced and abused—how transporingly do they beckon me back, through her!

Tell me not that it is too late. I have rioted with the wild forms of life's enchantment. Like Faust, I danced with the witches of the Blocksberg; and the person of one, whom I embraced, was ashes; and out of the mouth of another, whom I kissed, sprang a disgusting reptile; a third changed herself, in my arms, into a serpent; and so I stood on the deep declivity of my way, and looked round, and all behind me was terrible and dark. The same restless fire, the same thirst, still raged within me; but I sought other springs. I was strong and full of life. In the battle, in contest with the raging elements, I felt within me a higher power, a mightier existence—but all was so empty, so empty! I conceived not that the fulness of life could be found in any human form. A human bosom—great, full of love as the heavens, true, gentle, and pure—oh! there is a world in which to live! perfect, beautiful, and eternal. There is the fire of passion purified, but not quenched; the unquiet is made quiet; the strength is exalted and confirmed. If a spouse with a soul so great and lovely wandered by my side; if her heavenly spirit passed, every hour of the day, like a vernal breeze, over my soul; if she infused her pure and harmonious life into all that surrounds my daily path; if I could lean on it, as—O my God! I cannot say, as on a mother's breast, since that has spurned me from it; but could I press a wife to my bosom in a fast and everlasting embrace, and say, from the depths of my heart, "Thou art an angel, and thou art mine!" oh, believest thou not that earlier sins could be forgiven, that bitter memories could be expunged, that the wavering soul could become established in a higher love? Believest thou not that on the blasted ground a new paradise might yet bloom?

I look on Serena, and I must believe it possible. I have said to myself, "She must become mine, and I shall find peace on the earth!" But she—the good, the pure, the amiable—will she be able to love me? will she be willing to unite her fate with mine? And thee, in whose power lies her disposal, they who, above all things, estimate purity of character, social and domestic virtues, will these bestow her, the most beautiful and most precious of their possessions, on a man whose reputation from very childhood has been stained—whose life has been covered with darkness?

I hear thee utter these questions, and this is my answer.

There is something in me—call it pride, presumption, what thou wilt—but I know there is something in me which no one so readily withstands; a power, a will, which breaks iron; a fire which can devour everything before it, in order to burn in the air for which it yearns. I have proved it often, and no one can resist it but my mother; for my blood, also, runs in her veins—and yet, mother! we have not fought out the contest between us.

I have seen my mother! She knew me not again, and I scarcely knew her. She was a beautiful woman. She is much changed, and, it would seem, not simply through age. I sought opportunity to see her—I *must* see her; but, as I stood there as a stranger before her—as I heard again the well-known voice—I could not support it. She is not yet prepared for it, nor I either. I was desperately and painfully agitated in her presence; and, therefore, I flee it—till some fu-

are time. I love and fear, I languish and fly. Thus I stood, in agonizing strife with myself, when Serena entered. I placed myself by her side, and from this moment I became calmer. A hope, a ray of light, shone forth. If even my mother—my mother would not forgive Cain had perpetrated a heavier crime than I; on him rested the curse of his mother; and yet—into the desert into which he wandered, followed him his wife! An angel of reconciliation went with him.

Serena! Serena! if I did not love thee so devotedly, I could pity thee; for I feel that it is not in vain that I have fixed my gaze upon thee. But I will love thee as never woman has yet been loved. I will surround thee with all the charms of life; every day shalt thou make people happy, and thy noble heart shall live on blessings. Hagar must submit herself to her fate. It is long since she ceased to make any claims on my affections, and that must she continue to do, even did we remain together. She must and will make herself happy with another. She knows me—she will not dare Curse on her! Should she breathe a poison breath on thee, who But I am wild if I think on this woman, and I will not. Well, I will be affectionate—I will be as Serena wills. There are yet stores of the good and the tender in me; the spring is not irremediably defiled; it requires nothing so much as to be purified; but an angel must descend into the water.

But can an angel, indeed, approach him whom the curse of a mother? My mother! if she should not pardon! Ah, thought of destruction! vulture which gnaws at my heart—away! away!

All will be speedily spoken out and decided, for my soul yearns after certainty. It were, perhaps, wiser to postpone it, to await a fitting time; but I cannot, and I will not. I take my fortune always by storm—may it be so now!

FRANZISKA WERNER TO MARIA L.—

Rosenvik, August 17th.

Yesterday was a wonderful, rich, merry, and yet unpleasant day. We spent it at Ramm. We were some days before invited thither, with many of our neighbours. *Ma chère mère* was also invited, but excused herself, on the plea that for many years she has accepted no invitations, and now could make no exceptions. Serena had spent the preceding day with her grand-parents, and was to accompany them to Ramm, whither they were pressing invited by Bruno, who, by the new school, and through many other circumstances, had now placed himself in a close connexion with the worthy old Dahl.

At our arrival, we found all without unchanging; the trees grew, as before, wild and thick around the blackened walls. Bruno met us on the steps, and received us with a serious friendliness. There was something peculiarly prepossessing in his countenance. Bear was excited and pale, as he shook his brother's hand; none of us said anything, and Bruno conducted me in silence into the house, where the splendour of the furniture struck me with amazement. But my dear Serena soon engrossed all my attention. I thought I had never seen her so beautiful. That bright blue muslin dress, that net-lace handkerchief which she had thrown over her snowy shoulders, all became her so well; and her innocent countenance beamed with health and gayety. I and Rosenvik, thought I, with pleasure, have both contributed to these roses. The

patriarchs, too, said many kind words to me on the same score.

The guests assembled. Lagman Hök and Miss Hellevi Hausgiebel came together in the *désobligeante*. Exactly as we were about to seat ourselves at table, the noise of an arrival was heard in the court; and, to my amazement, I beheld an *Élender* pony, and driven by a young maiden, who, with her little equipage, made a large circle round the court, cracked loudly the whip, and drew up before the door.

"Ha! ha! ha! that is Mally, my little Mally!" laughed out the Major, who stood at the window with me. "Yes, yes, she cuts a dash in the world. She has taste in horses. People should let children follow their own propensities, Madame Werner; that fills them full of health and activity. It does no good, compulsion. They will become sober soon enough. I know that from myself."

Mally now made her entrance; her hair all flying wild; her gait at once waggish and awkward. Madame Von P. cast a look on her, and then on her own daughters, which seemed to say, "God be praised! my daughters have received education and accomplishment." My good Brita Kaisa, though a lover of the natural, blushed at the entrance of her daughter, and looked disconcerted.

"What a figure you are!" said she, as she busied herself to bring her clothes and hair into some degree of order.

"Eh! eh! mother, how you hurt me!" cried Mally, wincing and grinning.

Bruno conducted Madame Dahl to table, the rest followed in couples. The dinner was superb. Bruno will destroy the simple habit of the country with such examples of luxury. I shall tell him this. But he was a most agreeable host. His attention to the Dahls had something reverential and nearly filial in it, which became him well; and Serena appeared to observe it with joy. From the dining-room, Bruno conducted us down into the garden, where two ample tents were pitched. There, too, the accommodation of the patriarchs appeared to have been most solicitously provided for. In one of the tents were two commodious easy-chairs for them, and the ground was covered with the costliest matting. Before this tent a fountain threw into the air its fresh and splashing stream. Orange-trees, at once full of fruit and flower, stood at a certain distance round, and every breath of air bore to us their balsamic fragrance. I was charmed with the whole of this arrangement, which the unusual heat of the day made still more agreeable. My imagination transported me into an ideal world; I shaped to myself a romantic life in such scenery; and shepherdesses like Serena, and patriarchs, and tents, and orange-groves, and—but in this moment burst in Madame Von P., exclaiming, "Ah! how charming is all this, my dear Madame Werner! Graf L. and we had just such tents at Gustafsberg. One day they were with us, and the other day we were with them, *très familièrement*. It was uncommonly gay. The L.s and we had very little intercourse with the other society there; we were sufficient of ourselves. Oh! I should like to know how our common friend, the dear Baroness H., is; a delightful person! She and I find so much amusement together. Of course we have seen much of the great world, and have a multitude of common acquaintance."

"It is very hot here," said L. It was agreeably

cool in the tent, but Madame Von P.'s discourse made it feel to me quite sultry. I arose; my persecutor did the same. Immediately outside of the tent we met Bruno. Madame Von P. rushed up to him. "*Ah, mon cher Monsieur Romilly, c'est charmant, c'est charmant!* Your park is heavenly. What tints on these trees! What groups! What perspective! See there, my best Madame Werner—there, through the arch of the bridge, what effect! Nay, you must stoop yet a little more, yet a little—under this bough, here; is it not heavenly? (I was near breaking my neck.) What *ensemble!* what effect!" Bruno made a solemn bow to Madame Von P., and retired into the tent. I thought, "Oh! that this affectation of some people should be able even to destroy the enjoyment of nature for others!" Madame Von P.'s tints and effect had spoiled to me the whole prospect. At this moment I heard a loud cry; and, as I hurried towards the part whence it came, there saw I the Adamites, who had rent fruit and flowers from the orange-trees, and now set themselves in battle array, to prevent the passing there of some young gentlemen.

"There we have the state of nature," thought I, with a sigh. Brita Kaisa came forth, dealt out blows and cuffs among her brood; and, for this time, peace was restored, and we could enjoy our coffee, and the accompanying delicacies, in peace.

After a while two open carriages drove up, and Bruno proposed an excursion in the park. The carriages were for the elder portion; the younger must go on foot. Bruno offered Serena his arm. The two Dahls, Bear, and I, entered one carriage. The Major's lady, who was in the other, with Madame Von P., wished to have her children with them; but the Adamites vociferously objected, and were, therefore, intrusted, during the walk, to the care of their sister Mally.

We proceeded. The weather was beautiful, and I should have enjoyed the ride extremely, could I only have ceased to think of Bruno and Serena. "Will he say anything to her?" thought I; "and what will he say?" The patriarchs took their *siesta* in the comfortably-rocking carriage; Bear sat silent and sunk in thought; and so we drove, for perhaps an hour and a half.

As we returned, we saw the walkers also returning in different groups. As Serena, accompanied by Bruno, entered the drawing-room, I became immediately uneasy, for I saw that something had occurred. She was pale and excited. Bruno's countenance, on the contrary, was full of beaming life. After he had greeted us, and had inquired of the patriarchs whether they had enjoyed their drive, whether they had found the carriage sufficiently easy, &c., he sat down to the organ, and let loose the tones of that mighty instrument. It was the same power, the same deep inspiration, which transported me on the former evening on the lake; and now, as then, seized on my innermost soul. The Misses Von P. walked arm-in-arm in the next room, gossiping and laughing incessantly with some gentlemen, and were evidently only occupied with themselves. Madame Von P. had fallen into a desperate talk with Jane Maria; and I could not comprehend how Jane Maria, who is, nevertheless, musical, could, during such music, sit and gossip thus. It was quite a matter of course that Miss Hausgiebel, who has no taste for the science of sound, should be engaged with Lagman Hök, looking at some beautiful paintings. But Bruno was not altogether destitute of devoted listeners. Among these were Bear, the patriarchs, and Serena, who

now sat between them. I myself sat so that I could observe Bruno's countenance. It was in this moment remarkable—full of courage, passion, and love. That which was delineated on his features he poured forth also in a *fantasia*, in which every feeling, power, passion, and enjoyment seemed to contend together, and the conflict rose to the very pitch of despair; then, making a wonderful and bold transition, and in tones which reminded you of the words "Let there be light!" he fell into a noble air from the "Creation" of Haydn, in which the words, as well as the music, expressed how the elements arrayed themselves under the eye of the Almighty. I glanced at Serena. Deep emotion, but, at the same time, a quiet glory, illumined her beautiful countenance. Ah! it is in such moments that we understand the fulness of life—that heaven opens upon our spirit; it ascends thither on the wings of sound, embraces all the angels of life, comprehends all the love of God, all the beauty of creation, and is ready to expire with happiness.

Bruno's voice is not, properly speaking, beautiful; but is powerful, manly, and expressive. It is the voice of a mighty spirit. "O Bruno!" thought I; "hast thou received such fine endowments only to abuse them? Art thou able to sing only of the pure majesty of existence, and canst not establish it in thy soul, in thy life?"

The music ceased. Bruno's listeners sat silent, with tears in their eyes; even Miss Adèle Von P. stood in the doorway astonished, and, as it were, fixed to the spot by enchantment. Then came the unlucky Madame Von P., and overwhelmed Bruno with remarks on art, and on ancient and modern composers. "Weber," said she, "is whimsical; Rossini poor in melody; Meyerbeer excels both—he is, so to say, '*le prince de la musique*.'" It was in another way that old Madame Dahl expressed her satisfaction. She pressed Bruno's hand, and said, warmly, "You have made the old young again. It is very, very long since I have enjoyed such a pleasure; and I thank you from my heart."

"You make me happy," said Bruno, kissed her hand with deep respect, and seated himself near her.

A great commotion was now heard without in the hall. It proceeded from the Adamites, who were just returning from the woods, dirty and torn, but full of fresh life and spirit. They had started some roes, killed a snake, and captured a squirrel, which they now brought in in triumph. Brita Kaisa endeavoured to moderate their vociferous joy, but it succeeded only to a certain extent with Mally. The two younger children sprang screaming about, and clambered with their dirty feet on the chairs and sofas—oh, that *Ma chère mère* could have seen it! while they sought to amuse themselves with now letting that unfortunate squirrel loose, and now catching it again. Their parents at length troubled themselves no farther about their wild conduct; but Serena and I gave each other a sign, and mixed ourselves in the affair. The result was, that I set the squirrel at liberty; while Serena, partly by serious endeavour, and partly by sportiveness, drew the children to her, and succeeded in keeping them still by cutting them in paper a variety of little figures and equipages; and thus art exhibited her ability to tame rude nature.

The lively Miss Hellevi, who is always desirous to keep people in motion, proposed social amusements; and we commenced a game of forfeits, and were quickly all alive. A great

number of forfeits had to be redeemed, and Miss Hellevi shone wonderfully in witty and merry propositions. It was indescribably amusing that Bear had to dance. I never laughed so immoderately. You should really have seen his comic gravity and his strange grimaces.

"What shall that person do to whom this belongs?"

"He shall tell a little story," said Miss Hellevi.

The forfeit was mine, and, without consideration, I began to relate what presented itself first to my mind. It was this little legend. "Two little boys went down, on a holiday evening, to the river, near their father's house. There they heard beautiful music, and saw the *Neck*, which sat upon the azure wave in the shade of the alders, and played on the harp, and sang with all its heart. When the boys had listened a good while to the music, they called out, 'Of what use is it, *Neck*, that thou canst play so beautifully? Thou canst never be happy, for all that.' As the *Neck* heard these words, it threw away the harp, and sank into the depths of the water."

Here I paused, for I had accidentally looked at Bruno, and a glance of his eye fell upon me, so piercing, dark, and full of trouble, that it struck me dumb; it was some seconds before I could collect myself sufficiently to proceed. "When the boys returned home, they related the occurrence to their father. He reproved them for having spoken too severely to the *Neck*, and told them that they were wrong, for even the *Neck* may one day be saved. The next evening the boys went again down to the river. They heard no sweet music, but they saw the *Neck*, which sat on the water in the shade of the alder and wept. And they called to it, and said, 'Don't weep, *Neck*, for our father says that thou also wilt be saved one day.' Then the *Neck* wept no more, but took his harp again, and played and sung most gloriously till deep in the night."

I glanced again at Bruno. He was pale. His wonderful eyes were fixed steadfastly upon me, as before, but now they were filled with tears.

"Madame Werner shall have her forfeit again, and with thanks and praise for her charming legend," said Miss Hellevi. Other forfeits followed, and were redeemed by various jokes and whims. One came, whose owner was judged to declaim something in prose or verse. It was a silk handkerchief, and Miss Hellevi, as soon as she saw it, exclaimed, "Belongs not this to our host?"

"Yes," cried Mally Stålmarm, with a loud voice, "but I took it, because I myself had nothing to give for a forfeit." Mally makes very free in the world, thought I.

"But the law of the game cannot be violated," said Miss Hausgiebel; "the owner of the forfeit must redeem it. Mr. Romilly, you have heard the judgment."

"But," said he, excusing himself, "I was not in the game with you."

"But now you are," cried, zealously, Miss Hellevi; and, as Madame Dahl joined in begging that Bruno would fulfil the condition, he objected no farther. He arose, made no preparation, and yet in a moment was totally changed, as he stood there high and still, and sunk, as it were, in dark and profound self-questioning. His very first motion, his first word, went through me with a shudder. The scene was the truth itself. It was from himself, from his own inward cloud-wrapped spirit, that Bruno pronounced Hamlet's celebrated monologue,

"To be? or not to be? that is the question."

In truth, Bruno is no ordinary man, is endowed with no ordinary talents; and yet, as a man, how much higher stands my Bear! A deep silence continued in the room after Bruno had ceased to speak; and it appeared difficult to go back to the sports of life, after this glance into its dark depths.

In the mean time, it was growing late; and the aged Dahls, who would not stay supper, took leave of their host, thanking him, with much cordiality, for so pleasant a day. They took Serena, too, with them, and promised to deliver her duly at Rosenvik. Bruno accompanied them to their carriage. When they were gone all seemed to be wearisome; and, in order to get away from the everlastingly-continuing game of forfeits, I asked Adèle Von P., who sat next me, whether she would not take a turn with me in the park. She consented, with warmth. I took her arm, and we went out. The evening was beautiful; the twilight, the silence, all which surrounded us, appeared to invite us to that pleasant, and yet serious thought, which lights and the life of society so easily dissipate.

"How beautiful is it here!" said I.

"Yes," answered Adèle, "since here is the solemn reality."

I was surprised by the tone in which these words were spoken, and glanced at my companion. Adèle Von P. continued, with emotion: "Madame Werner, you have taken me, probably, only for a silly and superficial person, and I know now that I have been such. But to-day a wonderful feeling has been awakened in me. I feel myself humbled, and yet exalted. I would willingly begin again to live—to learn. I would fain be able to return to nature; to nature and to truth!"

"You would fain abandon artificiality for genuine nature? is not that it?" said I. "You would fain comprehend and receive nature, life in its deeper sense?"

"Yes, I believe so. I have sometimes suspected that my accomplishment was but a vain pageantry; but now, as I comprehend it better—now so much time is lost, God knows whether I shall ever be able to come to clear daylight!"

"Don't despair of it," replied I, zealously. "Hold fast only the impression, and maintain the desire which to-day has been awakened." At this moment was heard in the park an uneasy voice, calling, "Adèle! Adèle!" Adèle answered; and Madame Von P. came running to us, while, with evident alarm, she exclaimed, "Adèle! my little angel! you out here without a shawl, and with your cough! and the dew, and the night air! My dear child, how could you do so? Come in, I entreat you. But you must not go thus thinly clad. You must take my shawl, I need it less than you." And, notwithstanding the reluctance of the daughter, she wrapped her in her own shawl, and drew it carefully round her bosom. Mother and daughter, thereon, kissed each other affectionately, and hastened together into the house.

Had I always found Madame Von P. ridiculous? I forgot it totally at this moment. I saw only the tender, amiable mother; and I thought, "That is water to Bear's mill." If Madame Von P. only knew how really poetical and interesting she then was, she would be ashamed of endeavouring to appear so by other means.

As I had thus remained behind in the park, and as I was slowly returning towards the house, I encountered the young Robert Stålmarm, who was

walking to and fro, and talking to himself. He offered to see me in, and said, after a while, with a dissatisfied countenance, "It is very stupid to possess no talent, to understand nothing, to be able to do nothing which belongs to—"

"To what one calls higher accomplishments?" said I, inquiringly. (I found myself, this evening, selected to put people into the way.)

"Ah, yes!" replied young Robert. "I hear so much said of nature, and nature; but still, methinks it could not be very irrational to adorn her with some art, with some accomplishment."

"Yes, one must make a distinction between nature in her poverty and her rudeness, and nature in her exalted refinement."

Robert glanced at me with one of those living, intelligent looks, which reveal a brightly-conceived idea; but immediately afterward added, "Yes, was I not already so old; but now it is probably the best thing to chase all such thoughts out of the mind."

"What thoughts?" demanded I, warmly. "Of a talent, or a higher accomplishment? Good friend Robert, a talent for the exercise of any fine art is, comparatively, of little consequence; but the capacity to love and value that which is beautiful, the capacity to enjoy the society of accomplished people, to create for yourself a life full of noble interest—that is no trivial affair; and you are still young enough to qualify yourself for that. Renounce not, on account of any necessary exertion, the richest well-springs of the happiness of life."

We were now arrived on the steps, and I heard Robert, as if speaking to himself, say, "No, that will I not! I will attempt it in good earnest! It shall not be otherwise!"

These two little scenes delighted me. Suddenly and marvellously are startled into life the noblest seeds which slumber in the human bosom. Bruno's powerful spirit has at once, as it were with the force of magic, called forth two beings into a higher consciousness of their nature; and thus is, for the souls of men, the revelation of every noble gift, a proclamation to arise!

But to return to Ramm, and the supper. I was glad when it was over; and Bruno, to a certainty, was not less so. He was no more like the same person that he had been during the day than November is like May. The eyebrows had again contracted; and he had evidently found it difficult to play out to the end the part of the cheerful, agreeable host. How charming was it, as the cabriolet once more rolled away towards Rosen-vik, and as I was able to pour into Bear's ear all the relations which I have here written!

We arrived at home in the bright moonlight. I found Serena in the front room. She stood at the open window, her face turned towards Ramm. I went softly up to her and threw my arms around her. She leaned her head against mine. The evening breeze grew cold, yet soft, and bore melodious tones with it. They came from Ramm. I felt a tear fall on my bosom. Serena's lips touched my cheek, while she whispered, "My dear, kind Fanny, I must leave thee. I have been too long from home; let me, in the morning, return to my aged parents."

"Serena, my angel!" exclaimed I, in return, "what is amiss? What has happened? Why this?"

"Ask not," said Serena, while she laid her small fever hand on mine. "Ask not now. In a while, I will tell thee all; now I cannot. Let me go early in the morning with the doctor."

"And what will thy grand-parents say? if—"

"I will tell them how it is. I will satisfy them. Don't be uneasy, dear Fanny; they will be satisfied; they—"

"Yes, they! I don't doubt that at all," interrupted I, in a state of great excitement. "They, who will learn all; but I, who love thee, and know not why—I? Thou hast no confidence in me, Serena! Thou dost not love me!"

Serena threw her arm around my neck, and said, "Oh, Fanny! thou givest me pain. Thou knowest that I never had a friend that I loved so much as thee. That which I withhold from thee, that can I yet reveal to no one; but a day will come, when for thee, whom I sincerely love, I shall have no longer a secret."

"That is enough, my dear Serena! I was, indeed, too bad. Forgive me! But seest thou, dear Serena—thou art become as dear to me as a sister; thy welfare is as near to my heart as if it were my own; and—and—" I began to cry like a child; Serena did the same. Bear found us thus, and began to scold that we stood with the window open. When we had closed it, he took both our hands, and inquired, with a kind and sympathizing look, what so much troubled us.

"Oh, she will leave us, Bear! Serena will go home early to-morrow!" Bear looked so astonished at us, that I was frightened, and said, "Well, well, it is no national calamity, that you should be so struck with it." But Bear's countenance speedily recovered its customary good-humoured serenity, and he said, "Well, if she goes away, she will probably come back again."

"In my anxiety I had nearly forgotten this possibility, and, half comforted, I exclaimed, "Oh, yes, Serena! Thou wilt soon, soon come back again! Is it not so? Thou wilt not long stay away!"

But I will not waste my paper with speech and answer. Spite of my grounds of consolation, it went near my heart to separate from Serena, for I saw clearly that this year she could not again make a long abode with us. This morning she departed at seven o'clock; sitting at Bear's side with a large bouquet in her hand, while he set out, cursing a little, to himself, at a great basket of currants which he was obliged to set between his feet.

How empty seems the house, now she is gone! I endeavour in vain to forget it, and busy myself with writing, but that does not succeed. It is impossible to describe the charm, the spring, which such a being diffuses around her. She is always so friendly, so clear-spirited, so kind! I was better while I was with her. I learned through her to become aware of many blessings which are in life, and about me here. But now we shall daily write to one another, that is something; and Bear will be the postman. To-day, even, I rejoice in the belief that I shall receive by him a note; but her secret—that I shall not yet learn. It troubles and disquiets me.

TO THE READER, FROM A STRANGER LADY.

Dear and curious reader!—Averting myself of an apology already made, and commiserating the pain which thou, my reader, probably participate with Madame Werner, I will now—for, singularly enough, one and another knows more, as it happens, than the good doctor's lady herself—I will now, just between ourselves, let thee into a secret.

In the park at Ramm dwells Madame Werner, as she has already related. We, the reader and I, follow in silence the footsteps of the walkers.

During this ramble, we observe how the Misses Von P., notwithstanding their ornamental gentility, condescend to flirt with the brothers Stålmark, in a manner which evinces neither refinement nor delicacy of feeling. By this we see plainly that accomplishment and rudeness can very well go hand in hand. But we do not linger long near this picture, which has neither charm nor keeping. We cast a glance after Bruno, who conducts Serena, with an air of respect and solicitude which, to thy penetrating eye, sagacious reader, betrays what he is, and what he feels. Then follow the Adamites, with laughter and boisterousness.

"Lean more freely on my arm," says Bruno, with a soft and melodious voice. "Let me support you; let me believe, be it only for a moment, that I am of some consequence to you."

They went on in silence. The wood whispered around them, and bowed over them its umbrageous crown. There ruled now in Bruno's soul—and he has often said that it is this very feeling which makes him so happy by Serena's side—a peace which he has rarely enjoyed. Something of her dear and gentle being seemed to pass over into his own; he felt as though his better genius were near him; and the beneficent impulse of life, that genial feeling, that pure thought, that indistinct, and yet mighty hope of a beautiful future, those glad vernal anticipations, to which no heart which ever beat in a human form is wholly a stranger, all came like angels, and saluted his spirit. Then rose a voice in him—it was that of repentance—and cried, "Weep for the past, for the lost!" But another, sweet and strong as eternal mercy, cried, still louder, "Despair not, since she is nigh thee!" And then he looked into her face—it was so friendly and dear—and he saw her only.

At once the Adamites raised a ringing cry of joy, and sprang into the wood. Sister Mally called them back, continuing herself to run after them. A roe bounded timidly on before them. All vanished; Bruno was left alone with Serena. They stood still, as without aim. They stood by a fine old oak, round whose stem was raised a bank of turf, and about which flowers were planted. It seemed a spot that was tended with peculiar care.

"Will you not rest here a moment?" asked Bruno. "We can here await our little friends, who will probably come back hither."

Serena consented, and seated herself. Bruno stood before her, and followed observantly the looks with which she surveyed the place, and which betrayed awakening recollections.

"I fancy that I recognise this spot and this tree," said she, at length. "Yes, certainly; here it was, many years ago, that a great danger threatened me—I was then but a little child; a snake had wound itself about my neck. It would, most likely, have killed me, had it not been for the spirit and presence of mind of a little boy, who rescued me at the peril of his own life."

"Do you remember this circumstance?" asked Bruno, with emotion. "He remembers it himself."

"He! what? who? how do you know?" demanded Serena, rapidly, and in astonishment.

"He is my friend. He has often told me of the child that he carried in his arms through the woods of Ramm."

"Oh, lives he yet? Where is he? What know you of him?" asked Serena, in the highest excitement.

"He lives. Perhaps it were better if he did not. His life has given no one pleasure. But his unquiet heart cannot rest till it has found another and a better heart to which to unite itself. He experienced early that misfortune—that crime, indeed—he was rejected by his mother. He then went wildly about in the world for a long time, and battled with life, with men, with himself. He sought he knew not what; he had early lost himself. He who reposes on the bosom of a mother or a wife—who holds the hand of a dear sister—he knows not, he understands not, the emptiness and the darkness which he feels who has no one in the great wide world—no one who loves him, and holds him fast in love, and calls, tenderly, 'Come back!' no one who presses the repentant to his heart, and says, 'I forgive!' Is it to be wondered at that he who is thus cast off, wrecked in heart and hope, given as a prey to the winds—that he should wander wide, and into labyrinths of error? Serena, you condemn him?"

"I? Ah, I would weep over him!"

"Do you weep over him, Serena? He blesses those tears, and he is not unworthy of them. Bruno erred, but he sank not. An invisible hand supported him. Was it the angel which secretly whispered to him of a holier and a better world? I will believe it. Certain it is that he never forgot her. In his richest remembrances, in his best feelings, in the depths of his soul, she stood in the glory of her innocence. Oh, Serena! if he now stood before you, and said, 'This bias of childhood is now become love—true, eternal love; those memories are reality! They are dear to me, Serena, as the reconciliation with my mother—as the hope of God's mercy; dearer, a thousand times dearer, than life!' Serena, it is Bruno, the friend of your childhood, who here pays you the homage of his soul!" and, in boundless love, Bruno sank before her on his knee. "It is Bruno who craves from you his peace, his happiness, his life! Serena, will you cast me from you?"

"Oh, my God! Bruno!" cried Serena, in indescribable agitation, and reached him her hand.

He clasped it passionately between his own, and asked, with a look which seemed powerful enough to draw forth secrets which lie in the depth of the soul, "Is it pity? is it love, which extends to me this hand?"

"It is—not pity. Oh, arise!"

Voices were heard; footsteps approached. Bruno pressed Serena's hand to his heart as he arose, and said, "Preserve my secret! The hour is not yet come." He could say no more. Miss Hellevi Hausgiebel, at the head of a lively troop of walkers, joined them, and did not leave them again. In the evening, as Bruno conducted Serena to the carriage, he held her a moment back, and whispered, audible only to her, "One word! one word! Not pity; it was, then, a more beautiful feeling? Serena! one word—one look!"

But Serena spoke no word, gave no look, in answer. She drew her hand from his; and, timid as the bird flying to its nest, hastened to her aged grand-parents. Bruno looked darkly after the fast-speeding carriage; and I, my reader, now take a friendly leave of thee.

CHAPTER XI.

FRANZISKA WERNER TO MARIA L.—

Rosenbik, August 28th.

The cloud which hung over us has sunk lower. There will be a storm, to a certainty.

God guide it to blessing, and not to destruction. Serena was gone, and with her much joy, much pleasantness. No one felt it deeper than Bruno. He came, as usual, in the evening, but was no longer like himself. He came, saluted us gloomily, was silent, went to and fro in a restless mood, of seated himself near the spot where Serena was accustomed to sit, and leaned his head on his hand. Thus he sat a long time without a word; and only the vein on his forehead, which swelled visibly, testified the contest in his mind.

Bear frequently fixed on him the still, observant eye of the physician, which seemed to watch the progress of the inward struggle, and await the crisis. He was friendly—yes, even with a sisterly kindness—towards Bruno; and I saw that he himself suffered, because his brother was unhappy. Bruno appeared sometimes as though he would say something; it seemed to me as if he would ask, or would confess, something of that which lay heavy on his heart; but no such word came to solve the mystery, and all the conversation which we began ended with brief answers, or with his total silence. I must testify, however, that no bad humour—the demon with which little souls often tyrannise over those about them—discovered itself in the mood and manner of Bruno. One saw that he was in deep trouble, which rendered him deaf and dumb to all that was going on around him. We resolved, at last, to leave him to himself; and passed our evening as we usually do when we are alone—Bear with his joinery, and I reading aloud to him. Bruno might listen, if he were so disposed.

Last evening he came again, and was milder than usual. He took Bear's and my hands, pressed them, and said, "I am no agreeable guest for you, my friends; but have forbearance with me." He turned quietly away from us, and seated himself at the piano, where he played a stirring and stormy piece. Tea came in; I prepared it, and handed to Bear a large cup—he has always a particular teacup for himself, with ugly little blue cupids, which please him vastly. As I reached him this, and he, in his good-humour, kissed my hand, I know not how it happened—but he seemed so agreeable, so kind, so excellent—but I laid aside the teacup and basket of confections, and, seizing his great hand, pressed it to my heart with lively affection. Bear put one arm around me, but—oh, scandalous!—stretched out the other towards the cake-basket. I was still so good to him that I only scolded him jocosely for his divided love. Bear answered me in the same humour, when we were startled by a deep and painful sigh, more resembling, indeed, a suppressed groan. We looked at Bruno, and saw him pale, and with an expression not to be described, regarding us. "Oh, my God! my God!" exclaimed he, slowly, while he laid his hand on his forehead, as in unspeakable agony; and now ran—no, started—tears from his eyes, with a violence which at once astonished and shocked me. Bear stood up, and, with a unanimous impulse, we both approached Bruno. The iron bands were now rent from his heart; he stretched out his arms towards us, and cried, with a voice which the most powerful emotion speedily choked again, "My mother! reconcile me with my mother!"

Bear and I went to him; we opened our arms to him; we embraced him. He was nearly beside himself. He pressed us with wild vehemence to his breast; and, in broken sentences, which seemed flung, as it were, from his tempest

soul, he cried, "Manage for me; I cannot do it! I am cursed! Speak; prepare the way for me! See if I can go to her. Manage that, when I come, she shall not spurn me away. Say that I have suffered much—much. Let me repose on her bosom. Till then can I find no rest. My mother! my mother!"

Our tears flowed. We spoke to him tender, pacifying, comforting words. We promised to act for him; we assured him that all should turn out well. But the storm which, at length, had burst forth, could not quickly lay itself. He was in the most violent agitation of mind; and, after he had for some moments walked vehemently to and fro in the room, he said to us, "I must now leave you. Forgive this scene. Think of me, and for me. Let me know what you undertake; and let what must come, come quickly. This waiting is hell!" In the same moment he was on horseback, and vanished with the rapidity of lightning.

Bear and I stood *vis-à-vis*, and looked at each other as if the day of judgment had broken upon us. Bear forgot to drink his tea. I had never before seen him so disturbed. This filled me with wonder, for I had imagined that the affair, though it would be difficult to bring about, must necessarily end happily, and the prodigal must be once more received into his mother's house. "It is not credible," I said, "that a mother will not receive, with open arms, her repentant and returning son."

"Oh, thou dost not yet fully know *Ma chère mère*," said Bear, half lost in himself. "In certain regions of her mind she is, as it were, petrified; and then her mental ailment! I hope that she will acknowledge and receive again her son, when she sees him, and learns his present mood of mind. I hope it—but how to arrive at that? How to prepare her for it, when the mere uttering of his name drives her from all propriety? I will not answer for it, that her disorder of mind does not return. People like her and her son run, through the violence of their passions, on the very precipice of the gulf of madness. A touch may precipitate them."

"God preserve us!" I exclaimed.

"But, at all events, the attempt at reconciliation," said Bear, "must be made. Better that mother and son die in phrensy than in hate. But we must go cautiously to work. *Ma chère mère* must, in the first place, be sounded; her pulse must be felt; she is not a patient to be treated lightly."

We planned and pondered how the matter was to be assayed. We took up and threw away scheme after scheme; and, at length, we resolved on the following.

It has now been for some time the custom, when we are all assembled at Carlsfors in an evening, to read aloud romances, or other light and amusing stories. I have generally been the reader, and *Ma chère mère*, who seldom asks after any other books but the Bible and the cookery-book, yet seemed sometimes to listen with pleasure. Bear and I now resolved, the next evening that we should spend at Carlsfors, to propose a reading, and to be prepared with a story which should be adapted to a wake maternal feeling, and thus to allow us to observe the disposition of her mind towards her son. If this appeared auspicious, then another step might be taken. What this was to be we could not agree upon. I proposed that Bruno himself should then write to his mother; but this Bear rejected, as a measure

too startling and dangerous. He appeared rather to prefer some mode or office of mediator between mother and son. "It is a peculiarity of hers," he said, "that what she reads on paper never operates very effectually on her feelings. She must read it in the eye, she must hear the voice, if the words are to reach her heart. Thou, my Fanny—"

"Thanks, my dear Bear, profoundest thanks for your good intentions. But, if possible, let this commission be spared me. I feel that I have not the courage to place myself between these two violent spirits. I might very readily be crushed to pieces. Knowest thou not the fable of the earthen pot?"

"Well, well, we will see. It is time enough to think of the second step when the first has been taken."

"And for this I will immediately prepare myself; while you are in the city, I will select a fitting subject, or fabricate one."

"Good! And so we have the weapons ready for the occasion. But recollect, my little Fanny, the drift must not be too apparent. If *Ma chère mère* suspects a hidden object, she will set herself immediately against it."

"I will do my best, Bear. At all events, you shall peruse and criticise my story before we venture to read it to *Ma chère mère*."

During the night—one obtains the clearest ideas in the dark—it became manifest to me what text I must avail myself of; and, as soon as Bear was gone away in the morning, I took out of my bookcase, which Bear has famously supplied, "Fryxell's Stories from the Swedish History," and began to read over and consider the narrative of Erik Stenbock and Malin Sture. The more I thought it over, the more satisfied I was with it; and scarcely had I gone through it a second time, when there came an invitation from *Ma chère mère* to spend the evening at Carlsfors, if we had nothing better to do. I returned thanks, and said we would come. Since this moment I have been nearly in a fever, and it was in the endeavour to relieve my restlessness that I have written this. Already this morning, before he left home, Bear wrote a few lines to Bruno to acquaint him with our plan. The answer, which the messenger brought back, I had opened during Bear's absence. It contained only the words, "Do what Bruno."

Afternoon.

Bear has read the story, and is satisfied with it. We are setting out. Ah! Maria! this evening I am depressed and restless. I go to sound the depths of a heart; and on this moment how much depends! This thought lies painfully on mind and body. Adieu! adieu!

23d.

We were at Carlsfors. It was evening. The lights stood on the green table in the drawing-room, and we sat around. The important and trying hour was come. I was in a strange state of mind, and all the others were unusually silent and dull. Bear had taken up a penknife, and, in want of something to do, began to cut into the table. *Ma chère mère* struck him lightly on the hand, and then gave him a bundle of pens to make. She then sat herself down to make a fish-net, which is her customary evening employment; for her eyes are not strong enough to bear any finer work. "And now, little wife," she said to me, "read something to us; but let it be only something that is cheerful. One has enough in

the world to grieve over, without having to cry over what one finds in books."

"I cannot promise," I replied, "that what I read shall be lively, but I think it very interesting; and, what is more, it is in all its parts historically true."

"That is always a recommendation," said she, "and one must, therefore, adapt one's palate to the provision-basket."

I began:

"ERIK STENBOCK AND MALIN STURE.

"[From 'Malin's Own Family-book.']"

"In the parish of Mörkö, in the province of Södermanland, in a deep running creek of the Ostsee, lies a little triangular island. On this stood a rock ninety feet high, from which could be, far and wide, overlooked the fields, the crags, and the navigable waters which lay around. This island, in the early times, had been a resort of the Vikings; and deep caves were yet shown in the mountains, which were believed to have been the dwellings of these people, or used by them as prisons. Some believe that it was here, in the time of Ingiald Iliväda, the Fylkis-king of Södermanland, that Granmar received the Seeking, Hjervard Ylfing, and Granmar's daughter, the beautiful Hildegrund, drank to Hjervard the health of Rolf Krake. The place is called Sijmonsö (Sidmons island), which some explain to mean Seaman's Island. In the latter times, it has received, from its form, the name of Hörningsholm; and has been, by embankments, gradually converted into a peninsula. It was successively in the possession of the families of Folkunger, Ornesfot, of Ulvö, and the younger Sture; was strongly fortified, and often besieged, taken, and laid waste; the last time was in the reign of Christian the Tyrant.

"Svante Sture, son of Sten Sture the younger, who was married to Martha Lejonhufvud, afterward caused a castle to be built on the old site, which was a noble specimen of architecture, as it was strong through its situation and fortifications. The castle rose, on many fathoms deep of foundation-walls, four stories high, and was defended at the corners with strong towers. A conception of the wealth of Sture, and of the nobility of the time, may be formed, when we read that, at the wedding of Sigrid Sture with Thure Persson Bjelke, in the year 1563, fifty measures of wine, four tons of mead, a ton and a half of must, eight barrels of cherry brandy, twenty hogsheads of beer, forty-five oxen, two hundred sheep, twenty-one swine, seventeen calves, four hundred and fifty-three cans of honey, &c., were consumed. Through the confiscation of the Church property, in particular, a great number of estates fell to the nobles, and especially to Sture, the sole heir of so many mighty families. Through this vast wealth, through the unspotted glory of Sture's name, the marriage alliance with Gustavus Vasa, and the distinguished qualities of many of the children, the house of Hörningsholm stood long, in the kingdom, second only to royalty; and was the home of honour, pride, and joy. The joy vanished after the horrible Sture murder, in the year 1567; but Madame Martha maintained its pride, since the family had maintained its honour. Two surviving sons and daughters promised also to restore the joy. During their minority, Madame Martha ruled the house of Hörningsholm, and all its dependant estates, with a vigour and ability which obtained her the surname of King Martha. At the same

time, she distinguished herself by her magnanimity. Erik the Fourteenth had murdered her husband and two of her sons. When, by the change of the dynasty, Erik's wife and children were dispersed through the country, without home and protection, Madame Martha took to her the daughter, Sigrid Vasa, then four years old, and brought her up with motherly tenderness and care."

"This history delights me," said *Ma chère mère*, as I paused a moment in the reading; "it is good!" *Ma chère mère* raised herself erect, and looked as proud as if she herself had been King Martha. I am persuaded that she felt herself related to her. I proceeded.

"Erik Stenbock, the son of old Gustavus Olsson, of Torpa, and of Brita Lejonhufvud, went often, as a near relative, to Hörningsholm, and became passionately attached to Miss Malin, the second of the string of daughters. She returned his passion; but Madame Martha, on account of the near relationship, would not hear it even spoken of. They were, in fact, sisters' children. Stenbock sought to win his object by the ordinary means. He heaped presents on mother, sisters, and servants; but all was in vain. Many were moved, but not the old countess. She had taken the opinion, by letter, of Laurentius, the Archbishop of Upsal, who stood firm by the declaration which he had made on the third marriage of Gustavus Vasa, and protested against the union. Upon this, it became totally useless to speak farther of it to the countess. So passed many years. The lovers saw their youth pass over; Erik had counted his thirty-fourth, and Malin her thirty-third year; at the same time, their mutual attachment continued as warm as ever. Every means to move the mother had been tried in vain, and they resolved, at length, to fly. Stenbock confided his purpose to the Duke Karl, of Södermanland, then in his twentieth year, and received from him, in support of his plan, a guard of two hundred cavalry.

"In the month of March, 1573, he made a journey, with his sister Cecilia, the wife of Gustavus Roos, to Hörningsholm—concealed the cavalry not far from the castle, and instructed them what they had to do. The same evening, Miss Malin consented to fly with him the next day. She passed a night of great anxiety. In the morning, as she was alone in the chamber, she fell on her knees in a window, and prayed, shedding torrents of tears. At this moment the eldest sister, Madame Sigrid, entered the room. 'God bless you!' said she, 'you are engaged in a good business.' 'Would to God that it were good!' replied Miss Malin. 'It is certainly good,' said Madame Sigrid, 'to pray to God with tears.' 'Ah!' exclaimed Malin, 'if all my friends and relations should cast me off, you will certainly not turn your true heart away from me?' 'Why do you speak in that manner?' said Madame Sigrid; 'none of the race of Sture have ever done anything on account of which one need turn one's heart away from them.'

"At this moment the old countess called Madame Sigrid to her, but Miss Malin went into another room. Erik entered it immediately, greeted those present, and said to Malin, 'Dear sister, will you look at that horse which I have made you a present of? He stands below in the court.' She consented, and he took her arm to conduct her down. As they went through the lower story, there sat Nilfi, and Anna Sture's nurse, Lucy. Miss Malin begged them to follow

her, which they did. Below, under the arch of the gateway, stood the horse, harnessed to a sledge, in which the lady, with her followers, seated herself. Stenbock placed himself behind, and drove away, while many of the servants looked on in the idea that it was merely a hunting excursion. But, as the nurse observed that Master Erik took the way towards the sea, and drove so rapidly, she suspected mischief, and began to cry out, 'What are you about, my dear lady? Reflect how angry your mother will be that you travel so unattended.' But Master Erik drew forth a blunderbuss and set it to the breast of the nurse, with the words, 'Silence! or you have spoken your last!' On the shore below, the cavalry came suddenly forward, surrounded the sledge, and placed themselves on each side, and then away went they, as fast as the horses could gallop, to Svärdsbro. They were tailors and sewers, with the richest stuffs of all kinds, who took the lady's measure, and began to make her clothes, while the cavalry kept guard round the house, so that no one could come in or go out.

"But exactly as Master Erik had gone off towards the sea, Miss Margaret Sture had gone by chance to the window, saw, and comprehended the object. She began immediately to cry out, 'Master Erik is certainly carrying off my sister Malin!' At these words, the old countess and Madame Sigrid sprang, first to the window, and then down into the court. But upon the steps the mother fainted and fell down. When she was somewhat restored, she commanded Madame Sigrid to hasten at once after the fugitives, and see if she could not bring them back. In the mean time sat Madame Martha on the steps, in trouble and lamentation, and could not perfectly recover herself. There came, hurrying, Master Erik's sister, the Countess Cecilia Roos, and deplored that Master Erik should have acted so contrary to Madame Martha's will, asserting that she had known nothing whatever of his intention; but, at the same time, never could have believed that Madame Martha would have taken it so ill. Madame Martha turned, fiercely, her head, and answered, 'God punish you and your brother, who has robbed me of my child! Hasten at least after her, and remain with her, that no shame befall her.' Madame Cecilia held her peace and departed.

"When Madame Sigrid, whom the mother had sent after the fugitives, arrived at Svärdsbro, it was only alone, and that with difficulty, that she was admitted into the house. There she began to relate to the sister the sorrow and lamentation of the mother, and to exhort her to return, in which case the mother had promised to forgive her. Miss Malin made no answer. Then began again Sigrid, and still more vehemently, to exhort and entreat her, or that she would be the death of the mother. Malin said, 'If you can assure me that the mother will at last consent to our union, then I will gladly go back.' 'That I cannot do,' said Madame Sigrid. 'Then,' replied Malin, 'the first error is just as good as the last,' and began bitterly to weep. When Madame Sigrid found she could not persuade her sister, she returned to Hörningsholm, where the mother was lying in bed, in trouble and lamentings. Both were increased as Sigrid entered alone. Misfortune had before, but now disgrace had fallen on the house. She could derive neither comfort nor help, nor even the hope of revenge. She was a lone widow, with many daughters; the sons were yet scarcely more than children. On the con-

trary, the carrier-off of her daughter was himself a mighty man, the brother of the Queen-widow Catharine, supported by the duke, and in favour with the king. Nevertheless, Madame Martha determined not to give way.

"In the mean time journeyed Miss Malin, with the Countess Cecilia Roos and Master Erik, to his brother-in-law, Pehr Brahe, at Sundholm, in the province of Westgothland. There Erik left her, and hastened himself to Stockholm. But Madame Martha's letter of complaint had arrived there before him, and he was immediately deprived of his fiefs and offices, and placed in custody. There now arose an active mediation and sharp wranglings between the families Sture and Stenbock, which at length came to this conclusion, that Erik was again set at liberty. Thereupon he did all that was possible to win over to him the relations of Miss Malin, and he succeeded with all of them except the mother. He wrote to the Lutheran Academy at Rostock, and received thence the decision of the theologians, which he forwarded to her, that marriages between sisters' children might be allowed; but she paid not the slightest regard to it.

"Erik and Malin now despaired of ever being able to soften her; it was now a year and a quarter since their elopement; they passed over the Hallandish borders, were there married by a Danish priest, and returned the same day to Torpa, where the wedding was celebrated. At the same time, it was arranged that King John, the queen-widow, the Duke Karl, the princess, the council of the kingdom, and all the relations of Stenbock, should write to Madame Martha, and entreat for Erik and his wife. But the grief and the warmth of the mother were now only the more aggravated by the news of this marriage, which had taken place without her knowledge; and, spite of all the solicitations on their behalf, she would listen to nothing more respecting either her daughter or her son-in-law."

Here I paused a moment in order to sound the bottom of *Ma chère mère's* heart. "Is it really possible," said I, "that such stubbornness can exist? How can any one be so unbending and irreconcilable?"

"It is unreasonable!" said Jean Jacques.

"It is irrational!" said Jane Maria.

"It is unnatural!" growled Bear, with a horrible grimace.

"It is right!" cried *Ma chère mère*, with a voice of thunder. "It is no more than right! I would have done the same myself!"

"Oh no! that you would not, indeed!" said I, while I looked at her imploringly.

"The hangman fetch me, then, but I would have done it!" said she, yet more violently, and smote her fist on the table so that the lights tottered. "Yes, that would I; and if even thou, Franziska, hadst been the offender, and I thy real mother! Yes, I would thus punish thee. Thou shouldst never again come into my sight, not even if the king himself fell down at my feet and implored it. 'Easy mother, bad habits; strict mother, good habits.'"

My heart swelled within me. I felt the extravagance of *Ma chère mère's* notions, but the words, "Wert thou the offender and I thy real mother," produced the most singular effect on me. They converted me at once into the unhappy Malin, and put me into her situation. I suffered with, I deplored her; deeply I felt all the horror of a mother's wrath, and it was with the utmost difficulty that I could read what follows.

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"The mother's resentment lay, in the mean time, heavy on the heart of the daughter. Since her flight from Hörningsholm, Malin had never yet worn anything but mourning. She had received from her husband a multitude of jewels, but she had never needed them. She wrote continually the most sorrowful letters to her next of kin, praying them to use their influence in her behalf. The incessant prayers of her sons-in-law, and at length the whole of the daughters, throwing themselves at her feet, softened Madame Martha, and she gave permission for the two outcast ones to return.

"It was now a year and a half since their marriage, and nearly three since their flight. They were not, however, allowed to proceed at once to the castle, but must inhabit for some weeks the little Bath-house. At length, through the entreaties of the brothers and sisters, and on account of the approach of winter, and the ill health of Malin, they were permitted to enter the castle. Malin was conducted into the great hall, where Madame Martha was seated in the chair of state, and all the children stood around. As Malin appeared at the door, the mother exclaimed, 'Ah! thou unhappy child!' Then fell Malin on her knees, and so crept forward to her mother, imploring forgiveness with tears, and laying her head against her knee."

I paused; for my voice trembled, and tears were nigh. My heart was in that of Malin. At this moment *Ma chère mère* pushed the table from her, arose, and with a pallid countenance, and without casting a glance at any of us, marched with great strides out of the room, and banged the door behind her.

We sat startled and confounded. We knew not what to think. Was *Ma chère mère* angry? or was she moved? Did she suspect our object? or— Bear and I looked inquiringly at one another. I was angry with myself, and with the emotion which had occasioned me to interrupt the reading at so eventful a moment. *Ma chère mère*, through this, had had time for reflection, and now she could not hear the best part of the history—that beautiful ending of it. Oh, if she could but have heard it! It must have made her feel how beautiful it is to be reconciled, and King Martha's example would probably have operated with her. I longed, inexpressibly, for her return. But one quarter of an hour went by after another, and *Ma chère mère* came not back. Very mournful was I as supper was announced; at the same time it was announced that *Ma chère mère* would not come to table. She had headache, and was already gone to bed, wishing us a good supper and a good-night. I was restless and out of humour, and Bear was the same. We knew not what to think of the position of things. Immediately after supper, we took leave of Jean Jacques and Jane Maria. On our way home we became rather less dissatisfied with our evening. Our attempt could not be said to have totally failed. The reading had produced a powerful effect; and the excitement which *Ma chère mère* had shown might, with greater probability, receive a good than a prejudicial interpretation. We resolved that Bear should the next day, under colour of business with Jean Jacques, drive to Carlsfors, and discover how it stood with *Ma chère mère*. We talked of the principles of severity which she maintained. I did battle against them. I asserted, "Not irreconcilable severity, but rather are they wisdom and love which bring

into a family virtue, purity of manners, and peace."

"That is the beautiful doctrine of our time, Fanny," answered Bear; "but *Ma chère mère* belongs to a period in which the better portion endeavoured to oppose overdriven severity as an embankment against the growing demoralization of the multitude. She was educated in the strictest principles. Nature and circumstances have co-operated, in addition, to confirm and harden her in them. The ground itself is good; it is simply the one-sided conception and application—heavens! we are already at home!"

To-day Bear went, as agreed, to Carlsfors. *Ma chère mère* was not to be seen; still kept her chamber; and announced, through Elsa, that she could see no one. What will come of it? Bruno will certainly come hither this evening; would that we had more agreeable intelligence for him!

August 28th.

I have not written to you for several days. I am so restless. There is no change in *Ma chère mère* since I wrote. Jean Jacques, who, with the acquiescence of Bruno, is made acquainted with all relating to the matter, sends us daily intelligence. *Ma chère mère* will see no one, continues shut up in her chamber, and all within is silent as the grave. Elsa alone passes in and out like a shadow, and answers all inquiries with a shake of the head. Bruno has visited us every day, in the most miserable state of mind. He comes as the evening closes in, asks the same questions, receives the same answers, and goes away with the eyebrows drawn closely together, and his gloomy gaze riveted on the earth. Sometimes by night we hear, on the wind, from Ramn, the sorrowful but beautiful sounds which once delighted me so much on the Svanö. They rise and sink like mysterious sighs. It seems then to me as if there hovered over the water a spirit banished from bliss, and which would communicate to me its torments. I would on no account that Serena should hear these sounds. They pierce deep into the heart; and, to avoid weeping, I am obliged to bury my head in the pillow.

Serena! Oh, she has probably already heard more than is for her quiet! But what I know not. It is singular that she should not let me know; and she is by no means of a reserved character. She came, last evening, with her grand-parents. The good old people came, they said, to thank me for her. I thanked them for her. Gold-gelb was with them, but the little dissipated thing was not so true as usual to its mistress, but flew restlessly in and out of the window; at length he took his way across the lake to Svanö, and we lost sight of him. We waited in expectation of his return, but in vain. It grew late; and Serena, anxious about her little favourite, betook herself to Svanö, in order to fetch him back. But she stayed long, far too long, out. We became uneasy on her account—I most of all; for I knew not what presentiment it was which said to me, "Bruno has part in this delay." I could endure no longer to remain in this uncertainty; but, whispering a word in Bear's ear, left him to entertain our venerable guests, ran to the shore, took a little boat, and proceeded in quest of Serena. I arrived on Svanö precisely at the right moment to receive Serena, half dead, in my arms, and to see Bruno standing there more like a pillar of salt than a living man. I led Serena to the house. On the way she recovered herself, and the death-like stillness resolved

itself into a flood of tears. She wept so excessively and so passionately that I was beside myself. "Has this man insulted thee, Serena? I will detest, I will not know any more of him!"

"Oh, no, no!" answered Serena; "but—he is so unhappy!"

I could learn nothing more from her, deeply-excited as she was. Gold-gelb flew twittering between us. I had been quite in trouble about the little creature. I rowed slowly, on purpose that Serena might weep at her leisure. It was growing dark as we arrived. The old people, contented to have their darling again, made no inquiries about the cause of her stay. She became more composed, and the twilight concealed her tearful eyes. To-day I have received a note from her by Bear, in which she tells me that she is quite calm again, and begs me "not to be uneasy on her account, and at present to ask nothing; in a while I shall know all." For the rest, she writes so kindly, so cordially, it is impossible to be angry with her. But it is singular that we should both have secrets which we keep from one another, and both of them secrets which concern Bruno.

Later.

Bruno was here just now; dark as ever. He went away with a wild look, saying, "I shall not come again. If any change takes place, let me know it." He left us without an adieu.

It is now six days since the evening on which I read the history of Erik Stenbock and Malin Sture. *Ma chère mère* remains the same. Ah! what will be the end of these things? God help us!

A STRANGER LADY TO THE READER, BUT ESPECIALLY TO THE YOUNG LADY READER.

Young maiden, who hast merely gone botanizing into the land of Romance, and there picked up thy knowledge of men and of the world; who, on thy entrance into society, anticipatest, with a fearful pleasure, that the men will busy themselves about thee, either as the butterfly about the rose, or the spider about the fly—a word to thee. Be at rest; the world is not so fearful. The men have too much to do with themselves. Thou wilt have to experience that they will inquire no more after thee than after the moon, and sometimes even less. Thou armest thyself, thou of seventeen years, to resist the storm of life; ah! thou wilt probably come to have more to do with its inaction. But let not thy courage fail: there are life and love in the world in richest abundance, but not often in the form in which they for the most part are exhibited in romances. The romancer distils life; he makes a day out of ten years, and out of a hundred grains of corn draws one drop of spirit; it is his trade. The reality proceeds in another manner. Rarely come the great events, the powerful scenes of passion. They belong, in every-day life, not to the rule, but to the exceptions. On that account, thou good creature! sit not and wait, or thou wilt suffer tedium. Seek not the affluence of life without thee; create it in thy own bosom. Love! love the heaven, nature, wisdom, all that is good around thee, and thy life will become rich; the sails of its air-ship will fill with the fresh wind, and so gradually soar up to the native regions of light and love.

But why am I saying all this? In truth, because, in order to help Madame Werner with her every-day story—she wished to make a romance of it, but it was not her lot—I must now sketch

one of those exception scenes, which occur oftener in books than in life itself.

It was evening, and one of those evenings in which a loving peace breathes throughout Nature, and man is involuntarily led to a feeling and sentiment of that day in which all yet was good. Glowing and pure, the vault of heaven expanded itself over the earth; and the earth stood like a Gothic-crowned and happy bride beneath the bride-canopy, smiling, still, and in full beauty. The sun shone upon golden corn and ruddy fruits. Thick-foliaged and hushed, the trees mirrored themselves in the clear lake. Here rose the twitter of a bird, and there the song of a peaceful voice. All seemed full of enjoyment.

It was then that Serena's light bark, like a leaf-branch with its blossom, floated softly over the quiet waters. Then was it, too, that an eye, looking from the gray Ramm with a telescope, directed itself towards the innocent Rosenvik. Bruno sees the little bark push from the shore; guesses whom it bears; and an inexpressible yearning, a mighty desire, fills his soul. That tempestuous heart, which long had beaten in wild disquiet, that scorched-up feeling, which through days and nights of agony had preyed on itself, panted after refreshment and repose. There is a simoom more burning than that of the African deserts; there is a fountain more quickening and thirsted after than those in the oasis of these deserts. Bruno is the pilgrim, consumed with the fire of torturing feeling; Svanö is the oasis, in whose bosom bubbles the fresh water of life. For she is there—she, with the pure heart, with the clear, heavenly glance; and in the presence of her, of the gentle woman, in Serena's presence, Bruno yearns after rest, after life—longs—and—sails forth.

"Hast thou entered into the treasure-chambers of the snow? or hast thou seen how the light parteth itself? Hast thou entered into the caverns of the sea? Hast thou wandered through the abysses of the deep?"

Well might the unflinching Creator of nature and the human heart thus ask, and well might the earthly inquirer, like Job, lay his hand on his mouth, and be still. Into the depths of the human heart, more than into any other, it is the Eternal eye alone which can penetrate, and behold how the light springs up, and how night and storm come.

Bruno was like the climate under the Line. A stream of fire went through his soul, and under its influence lay all his feelings. Hence, now, this dead quiet, and then, again, this raging tempest, with its devastating power; hence, also, this luxury of feeling, life, and love, which sometimes bursts forth so mightily, and, like the rapid vegetation of a lava-scorched soil, and like love itself, buries in its breast all traces of violence and offence. And thus it happened, that, in the beauty of the evening, sailing over the quiet waters to the little island, where goodness and peace had now made their home, Bruno gathered a tempest into his bosom, and felt burning sensations pass through his soul like jagged lightnings. A secret wrath against somewhat, an infinite desire after something, a fever, a torment, flowed fiercely in his bosom. There are words which can annihilate, flames which can make blessed—he stands on the margin of the little island, like the spirit of a volcano.

Serena stood beneath an oak. Above that light and beautiful sera, h-head, the lofty boughs

stretched themselves lovingly. There lay a cloud of sadness on her innocent brow; and, sadly smiling, looked she at Gold-gelb, which, at the inviting tones of her voice, now descended from branch to branch, and finally alighted on her hand. But, suddenly, he flew in alarm away, and Bruno's dark, tall form stood before her. She blushed, trembled, but continued still, and looked up to him with her clear Madonna gaze. Bruno looked on her, and his soul became calmer; that inexpressible pleasure diffused itself over his mind which he never experienced but in her presence. But this feeling fell now like a rose upon glowing coals; for a moment mitigated, in the next, that fire only drew fresh nutriment from it.

"Will you also fly me? Will you, too, cast me from you?" asked he, with his dark, flaming eyes fixed on her. And, as she still gazed on him with an inquiring and troubled look, he said, "Serena! speak to me one friendly word. My soul needs it."

"Friend of my childhood!" said Serena with her angel's voice, and extended to him her hand.

"Oh, Serena!" said he, while he raised her hand to his lips, "hear me, I must speak with you! Seat yourself beside me. You will not? Will you, then, not bestow a moment on the friend of your childhood?"

There was in his look so much of beseeching, so much of anguish, that Serena could not resist it; she seated herself on a moss-covered stone. He placed himself before her on his knees; there was something childlike, something tender and mild, in his whole bearing. He gazed on her, and the fire in his eyes melted into a feeling of inexpressible tenderness; tears glittered there. He spoke not, but on his fine lips lay fiery and sweet thoughts. They opened, and thus he besought her.

"Say *thou* to me, Serena! Oh, say *thou*, as then when we were children! children, happy children; bridegroom and bride!"

Tears bedewed Serena's depressed eyelids, but she hesitated.

"Say *thou*!" implored Bruno, more vehemently, more fiercely. "Serena! good, lovely Serena! call me *thou*!"

Serena hesitated still. Deeply did she feel the consequences of this word and of this moment.

"You will not!" exclaimed Bruno, as he arose. "Serena! then am I totally indifferent to you!"

"Oh, no, no!" replied Serena, deeply moved.

"Not?" began Bruno again, fiercely, and seized her hand. "Oh, Serena! torture me no longer. Leave me not in this rending doubt. Oh, speak! Will, can Serena love me?"

Serena looked at him with tearful eyes, and said, "Yes." Her whole soul lay in this answer.

"Oh, then, must you become mine, heavenly being!" exclaimed Bruno, embracing her knees with passionate joy. "Serena, thou wilt, thou must become mine! Tremble not. Spurn me not from thee, noble and adored angel! Obey thy heart, listen to my love, and happiness shall be my lot upon earth. Wherefore tremblest thou? As I was a child, and carried thee about in my arms through the woods of Ramm, and sprang with thee over many a gulf, then thou didst not tremble. Oh! as in the days of my childhood, will I bear thee my whole life through in my arms, and hold thee securely to my bosom. Let every doubt, every uncertainty, vanish in this moment; we will bind fate with our affection. Serena, give me now thy truth! swear to become

mine; swear, that henceforth nothing shall separate us."

"Bruno! Bruno!" said Serena, terrified with his vehemence, "have you forgotten—your mother—my parents?"

"Forgotten? No! I have not forgotten them, nor those customs and usages which lay the life of the heart in bondage. I have not forgotten them; but they bind me not. I acknowledge a higher power than theirs; I know a higher world than that in which they rule and fetter. But I understand thy anxiety. Like the flower on the island here hast thou grown up, till thou hast ceased to feel and believe that there is a world beyond it. But the world is great, Serena; and, for two hearts which beat in unison, there are a hundred open paradises. There are other climes than this in which thou wast born; other religions, other manners; but the sun and love rule everywhere. I have seen this beautiful world. I have seen there the life free from fetters—millions of beings live in this atmosphere of freedom, and obey only the dictates of the heart—"

"And were they happy, Bruno? Were they contented, these beings who had renounced all the commands of Heaven? Were you yourself happy in this world which you extol so highly?"

"Happy! No, that I was not; because I had found no Serena. But now—oh, hear me, Serena! and reflect that my life depends upon thy answer. If everything should oppose itself to our union, wilt thou not yet become mine? Or say, what better can life offer than boundless love? Life, Serena, is poor, is miserable, when love exalts it not. That Almighty Being who implanted in us the necessity of happiness, he has not commanded us to renounce it. He who kindled the leading star of love in the heart, cannot desire that we should condemn its guidance. Serena, I love thee! I will lay my soul in thy hand, and say, 'Do with it what thou wilt, but be mine for ever!' Oh! let me conduct thee out of this narrow corner of the world, where thy life will wither and fade away; let me introduce thee to a life of freedom and joy. Give me thy hand, as thou hast given me thy heart; become, in another country, under a fairer heaven, my wife. Thy path shall be strewn with roses; riches shall be at thy command; thou shalt open thy hand, and make men happy; and I will thank thee for all, for everything, with a love which shall have no counterpart on earth. I will create thee a paradise out of whatever is beautiful in nature, and what is good and joyful in life. Serena, what canst thou there find wanting?"

"Peace," answered Serena, as she arose, and her bosom laboured with desperate emotion; "peace with myself! peace with Heaven!"

"So," said Bruno, slowly, as he also arose, and fixed his flashing eyes with an indescribable expression of scornful reproach on Serena; "so, Serena, thou also art but one of the ordinary tribe of women! Their love is but a house-lamp, a faint and timid flame, which can only burn in a well-closed room. Thou wilt not make me happy—thou wilt not follow the dictates of thy heart, since thou tremblest for thy eternal salvation! Thou wilt not make the slightest offering for him who is ready to sacrifice everything for thee. And this is called virtue! Oh, weak, miserable selfishness! But listen!" and he approached her with a daring wildness: "I will teach thee what love, what true love is! And yet, perhaps, thou dost not understand me, pious maiden! Knowest thou what sacrifice he who

truly loves can make, without a thought? Yes, even his eternal happiness! Oh, that thou wert doomed to the deepest and most fiery gulf of hell! I would, with boundless joy, plunge myself in, that I might be damned with thee, and there, with thee in the bottomless abyss, I would despise the thunders and the felicity of heaven! But thou comprehendest me not; thou knowest not what love is!"

Serena leaned her forehead on her hand; a terrible convulsion raged in her spirit. Night and lightnings alternated there. Ah! Serena knew what true love was, and Bruno's words found an echo in her soul. For a moment its transparency became clouded, and the mighty consequences of this sacrifice were no longer clear in it. In a feeling of inexpressible anguish, she raised her eyes and her clasped hands towards heaven, and spoke as if unconsciously. "They would be miserable; they would get up in the morning and find me not; they would go to bed with tears for their child!"

Bruno saw what was passing in her heart. Demoniac powers took possession of his soul, and they exulted as they saw her waver; and in his eyes were flames, and in his voice a tone, boldly insinuating—before such, angels have fallen!

"Oh, Serena! let no childish weakness misguide thee to belie thy own heart. Be strong, be true to thy love, and confide in me. Be mine, and I will recompense every pain, and I will change every sigh which disturbs thee into happiness. Away with pusillanimous fear! Conquer, my Serena, the ordinary weakness of thy sex. Give me that assurance, that oath which will elevate me above all the changes of fortune, all the menaces of fate; which will confer a home on the banished, blessings on the cursed, and peace on my heart. Oh! my Serena! why hesitate? why waver? Art thou not already mine? Were not our souls united in childhood? Are they not now warmed with one flame? Serena, we are already one! one before him who poured his love into our hearts. Or dost thou believe that they could be separated! Never, Serena! beloved as my own life, thou art mine! mine!"

He had seized her hand; with a passionate and irresistible force he drew her closer to his bosom. There are hidden, marvellous inspirations, through which the tempted, but pure spirit receives strength to triumph over even that which is dearest to it. It was such which sprung up in Serena's soul, and filled it at once with desperation and Divine light. To resist Bruno's power she must tear herself loose from him; and to his words, "Thou art mine, mine!" she answered, shuddering, "No, I love thee not!"

"Thou mayest think so," exclaimed Bruno, with a demoniac smile, "but thou deceivest thyself." He embraced her, pressed his hand on her heart, and proceeded, with a triumphant expression, "Thou lovest me as I love thee! By the beating of this heart, I swear that, if thou refusest me, this love will blanch thy cheek, and misery will become thine. In vain dost thou resist me; in vain dost thou deceive thyself. As certain as thy heart beats beneath my hand, has a higher Power united our fates. Resist it not. It is in vain, Serena; thou art mine!"

Serena stood motionless; her dark eyelashes sunk upon her pale cheeks; fainter and fainter beat her heart beneath Bruno's burning hand; yet, like the whispering of a spirit, clear, soft,

awfully and marvellously penetrating, issued from her lips the words, "No, I love thee not!"

An icy chill went through Bruno's veins. A voice like this, words thus pronounced, he had never yet experienced; and Serena leaned, like a marble image, on his breast, so cold, so still, so—dead. He released her; he gazed on her with a wild dismay. "I love thee not!" repeated Serena, and stepped backward, her cheeks assuming every moment a more deathly paleness, her heart beating ever fainter.

"Serena!" shouted Bruno, with a voice which might have awakened the dead from their everlasting sleep. Serena sighed deeply. "No, I love thee not!" repeated she yet again, with a firmer and clearer tone. Her knees failed her; she would have fallen to the ground if Franziska had not arrived at that moment and received her in her arms.

BRUNO TO SERENA.

"Yet once more these words! Speak them once again, and no sigh of love or pain, on my part, shall ever disturb your quiet more. But, Serena! if you deceived me, if you deceived yourself in that moment, if your heart abjures the words which your lips spoke, then hear me yet this once. My impetuosity wounded you. Forgive me this, Serena; it is now passed. I am quiet; and, at the same time, this restless, this thirsting heart yearns for the belief that it beats not alone; and, if unworthy of it, will I still believe that I am beloved. I stand on the crisis of my life. Love alone can save me. I have a mother; I have trespassed against her, and she has cursed me. I hope not for reconciliation with her, although I seek it. If this be denied me, shall I then despair, Serena? Will no dear heart bind me fast to life? Will no angel follow me into the wilderness? Oh, Serena! dost thou love me, and hast thou not courage to share my fate? See, I will not adorn the prospect of our future; I will not invite thee to share happiness and joy; I call thee to a participation of sorrow and tears. Perhaps our future may be dark; perhaps thy heart may never find peace on my bosom; perhaps even thy cheeks blanch beneath my kisses; but yet, yet I ask thee, Serena, hast thou not courage, not love enough, with me and for me to suffer? Serena! there are sufferings, sufferings to the death, which are not bitter; which possess their own great, their marvellous enjoyment. Great is the power of love, even to make happy the night of pain. Yet how? When the rejected one breathes peacefully at thy side; when his eye, through thee, raises itself towards a heaven where dwell mercy and love, and when this eye then rests on thee with infinite thanks and blessings—Serena, couldst thou then be unhappy? And if even thy cheek grew pale, if thou leanedst thy head against a bosom which was filled with thee alone; and if in death thy gaze met a look of unspeakable love, which, living only in thee, with thee will be extinguished, and on reawaking seek only thee? Oh, Serena! together to love, to suffer, to enjoy; together to die, to be one here and beyond the grave—this was my dream as I saw thee. Was it a dream? Oh, Serena! was it a dream, which I felt as the reality of my existence, as the solution of its yet uncomprehended enigma? Serena! answer me with the truth which lived so beautifully on thy childish lips—I ask once more, was it a dream? Say, no! and be mine. Or repeat your last words."

SERENA TO BRUNO.

"No, Bruno! I will not repeat those words! They were not the truth. It was the fear of my own weakness which called them forth. If it can do you good, Bruno, if it can be a solace to your heart, then receive my assurance—I love you! To share life and sorrow with you would be happiness for me. But, Bruno, hear this, my last word. I write to you by the bed of my grandparents' rest. They slumber softly; my voice has soothed them to repose. The light of the lamp falls on their reverence-inspiring heads, and illumines their gray hairs. Bruno, here is my post, and I will not move from it, let my heart suffer what it will. To make glad and peaceful the life of the two aged parents who have cherished my childhood, and my whole life till now, that is my office, and my dearest duty. The lamp which enlightens the evening of their days Providence has placed in my hands, and I will protect it faithfully to my last sigh. Oh, Bruno! if you will win me, you must first win these. Only when they can with joy lay my hand in yours, can I joyfully and confidently consent to it. The way to me is through them.

"And if this must be for you a parting salutation, then fare you well, Bruno! God bless you! Wherever your path may lead, think that a true and sympathizing heart follows you with blessings and prayers.

"Bruno! friend of my childhood! I would say something which should give you peace, I fear that you deem me cold and indifferent. That pains me. But I know that there is another and a better world; there will you better read my heart, there will you pardon your SERENA."

CHAPTER XII.

FRANZISKA WERNER TO MARIA L.—

Rosenvik, August 31st.

FOR two days after I last wrote to you we, waited in great uneasiness; but, as not the slightest change in the state of *Ma chère mère* was made known to us, Bear proceeded to Carlsfors, and spoke sternly to Elsa, so as to make her talk. Then spoke she out plainly, that *Ma chère mère* was very much the same as she was fifteen years ago. She does not sleep of nights, speaks not, eats and drinks next to nothing. She has the room kept dark, sits constantly with her face pressed on her hand, and sighs, sometimes, as if her heart would break. For the rest, she has forbidden Elsa to speak a word to any one concerning her.

"This must not continue!" exclaimed Bear, when he had related these particulars. "It may become a relapse into the old complaint. We must, by some means, break the spell; and this must be done—through thee, Fanny."

"Through me!" I exclaimed, starting back. I am persuaded that I was pale as death.

"Yes, through thee! Thou knowest well, thou seacat, that no one stands so well with *Ma chère mère* as thou. No one possesses so much influence over her heart. Use it now. Thou must break through her door, and into her bosom. Yes; thou must do it, and thou must also go as boldly and as circumspectly about it as a thief in the night."

"But the picklock, Bear, the picklock? How am I to pass through her door, and into her more bolted heart?"

"Through her doors? Elsa will leave them open for thee. I have spoken with her about it. And how into her heart? Let thy own become warm, and thy tongue will find words which will penetrate through bone and marrow."

"Ah, Bear!"

"And thou must not permit thyself to be frightened away by any hasty expressions, by any angry look. Have courage; be steadfast, strong, and tender. Think on Bruno! Think on the reconciliation of mother and son! Yes, just so must thou look, just so must thou feel, and thou wilt achieve a good work, Fanny; or, at least, wilt force this gloomy pain to effusion, which, if it continues as it is, will conduct her to madness."

Sweet is the voice of flattery, and especially when one hears it from one's better half. I suffered myself to be persuaded to dare the attempt; but courageous was I by no means. To force myself into *Ma chère mère's* chamber, contrary to her most positive command, and to appear before her—hu!

We determined, farther, that Bruno, during my interview, should wait in Jean Jacques's room, so that, if it took an auspicious turn, he might immediately throw himself at his mother's feet. Bear wrote to Bruno on this proposition, who answered merely with these words, "I agree with you, and will be there." The next day was fixed for the fearful interview. No sleep came that night into my eyes, and I was once on the very point of waking Bear, and telling him that I really had not the courage to meddle in the affair. But I heard again the wonderful, sorrowful tones from the unhappy anchorite at Ramm. They sounded imploringly. I recollected Bruno's tears and his prayer, "Reconcile me with my mother!" and I determined firmly to submit myself to Bear's requiring; but I was still in a thousand troubles how I should carry the matter through. "I should say what my heart dictated," said Bear; but my head would also play its part, and act the tutor of the heart, and reject its somewhat uncertain plan, and prescribe speeches with which the heart had nothing to do. So disputed head and heart till the moment that we must set out. My situation was by no means to be envied, but I said nothing to Bear; I would not disquiet him with my own disquiet.

We set out. It was Sunday. The bells rung with such a friendly solemnity through the quiet air. Country people in holiday garb, with prayer-books in their hands, met us on the way. They looked so peaceful, so contented, as they went to the temple of the Lord. I envied them; and the nearer we approached Carlsfors, the farther I wished myself from it. As Bear took my hand to help me from the carriage, I trembled in every limb. The cunning Bear said nothing, asked nothing, but only pressed my hand.

Bruno was already with Jean Jacques. I was terrified at his paleness, and at the change in his appearance; but I said nothing. He also was silent. Jane Maria was, as I fancy, somewhat offended, on account of the greater trust which had been put in me, and said something of having "too much self-confidence." Oh, my God! that now I certainly had not. I had rather have been in Mesopotamia keeping sheep than thus to step before *Ma chère mère* as a mediator. After we had talked a while about nothing, and with long pauses between, Bear fixed on me his still, solemn gaze. There was legible in it

"Now!" I arose. I regarded myself as a sacrifice. Tremblingly, I made some steps towards the door. Suddenly I found myself in Bruno's arms, who, with his deep, powerfully-penetrating tone, said, "A blessing on thy proceeding! Blessed be the words of peace on thy lips! My life depends upon them!" And the singular man pressed me passionately to his bosom, and his tears fell on my brow. I stood there surprised and moved, as Bruno drew me to him, kissed me, and said, softly and fervently, "God bless thee!"

He did so. From this moment, all fear, all reluctance, left me. I was totally changed. My heart became strong; and with firm and light steps I advanced to the room where *Ma chère mère* sat in her darkness. I threw out no farther plan as to what I should say or do; I left it all to the inspiration of the moment.

Before the door of the cabinet stood Elsa, motionless, silent, and like a mummy. She gave me a sign that she understood my purpose, and wished me success. She had left the door open, and I glided softly into the cabinet. It was empty, dark. The blinds were let down. Softly, I opened the door of the sleeping-room; and, as I entered that great, dark chamber, I was shocked to see *Ma chère mère* lying on the floor. At my entrance, she raised her head, and looked at me with a gaze so wild and disordered that I shuddered. Yet I drew some steps nearer, and said, with a tender uneasiness, "Is *Ma chère mère* unwell?" She raised herself completely on her feet, and the cap seemed to lift itself on her head. She rushed towards me, her nose contracted and pale, her breath whistling, and her whole bearing so menacing that she must have terrified one less brave than I was.

"How canst thou dare to force thyself into my chamber? How canst thou dare to disturb me?" demanded she, wild and stern, as she drew near me.

"I did not find *Ma chère mère* without, and, therefore, I came hither," said I, as composedly as possible, and without giving back a step. She gazed at me a moment, while she seemed to collect herself; after which, she said, quietly, and, as it were, to herself, "I had probably forgotten to bolt the door—stupid!" She went away from me; opened the drawer of a bureau, and appeared as though she would lay something in it which she held in her hand, but she let it fall on the floor, and it rolled towards me. I stooped and took it up. *Ma chère mère* approached me with the expression of a hyena, and wished, I fancy, to snatch it out of my hand; but I regarded attentively the little medallion on which the lovely head of a child was painted, and said, with a degree of ease which I now can scarcely comprehend, "What a beautiful child!"

Ma chère mère stood still. She appeared highly excited, yet in a softer mood. She took the medallion gently out of my hand, but held it so that I might observe it with her, and said, "Yes, yes, indeed, a lovely child. Ah! the crown of all children! Dost thou know the name of the boy, Franziska? dost thou know his name? Dost thou know whose child he was? Dost thou know it? dost thou know it?"

She looked, with a keen, inquiring glance, into my face. I was obliged to cast down my eyes before her penetrating gaze, as I answered, "No!" according to the literal truth, though I guessed who it was.

"His name was Bruno," began *Ma chère mère*.

"He was my only son! Mine, mine"—and here she pressed my shoulders together between her hands till I thought she would have crushed them. "He was my only son," continued she, as she withdrew her hands from me and raised them towards heaven: "to-day is the day on which I gave him birth." She was silent; and then proceeding again, as if speaking to herself, and with an expression which rent my soul, "This day three-and-thirty years I gave him birth. With deadliest pangs I gave him life! Oh, that I had died at that moment! for he! oh!—but he was my pride, my proud joy, my boast, my all! He was to me more than God. Oh! the Lord has smitten down my pride—no, not he, but the devil. The devil smote my strength, and took my child. Oh! children give to our hearts life and death." Here she crossed her arms over her breast, and sunk her head low, as if crushed to the earth with sorrow. As she raised herself again, she turned to me with a sharp, penetrating look, and said, "Thou knowest what has happened, Franziska. Thou knowest all about him. Deny it not. Thy husband knows it; I see it in the bottom of thy soul!"

I did not deny it; my look spoke for me. I drew near to *Ma chère mère*; my heart was warmed towards her; she laid her hand on my shoulder, and said, "God protect thee, Franziska, from ever suffering what I have suffered; from feeling what I have felt, and what I now feel. God preserve thee from it! Child! child! it is not good, when the heart of a mother is converted into hate against that to which she once gave life, when her bosom must repel that which once drew its nutriment thence—I tell thee it is not good. What wishes the happy mother for her children? That they may live long on the earth; that they may settle near and dwell around her; that they may receive her last breath, and close her eyelids when her last hour is come. Yes, that wishes she. But what do I wish for my only son? Yes, that!"—and her countenance assumed a terrible expression—"that he may lie deep in the earth, or at the bottom of the sea; that these ears may never hear his voice! Oh, that he were dead, dead, dead!"

I shuddered at these wild and desperate words, and, in the highest state of excitement of mind, the wretched mother proceeded.

"If the son goes from the father's house into the wide world, what does the mother give him to carry with him on his long journey? She gives him blessings; she gives him the best the house contains; and she follows him to the door with tears, and kisses, and names full of love. Yes, this does she; but to my only son gave I my curse. That was all, besides his life, which he carried with him from me into the wide, wide world. I cursed my only child! Seest thou," she continued, with ever-growing wildness, "I had laid upon his head all my love, my honour, my pride—and he heaped shame upon mine. Shame heaped he on the head of his mother. See!"—and she rent the cap from her head, and cast it fiercely on the floor, while the gray, yes, nearly snow-white hair, fell down in waves on her shoulders—"see! grief has strewn its ashes on my hair. Before it was black—but in one night fell snow—it is now become white. The son has bleached the hair of his mother. He caused that the people pointed with the finger at her, and said, 'See! she was the mother of a thief!' Ought she not to curse him?"

"Ah! he was yet so young," I stammered

forth—"he"—I could scarcely speak. *Ma chère mère* heard me not, but went on, addressing rather herself than me. "Yes, my hair became gray; but what did not become gray? my colour, my soul, the whole world! When the curse was pronounced, and the cursed one was gone forth, and no one knew whither—then came a wondrous time. It became dark in me, and I sat in the dark; and days, months, years, went round, and I knew only that all was dark—dark as the crime and the curse! I thought that the spark of life would perish in the darkness; but it was stronger than the darkness, and than care—and I issued from the darkness, and beheld light again. I learned at least to bear. I sought to forget him; I thought—he is dead!"

My tears flowed; my whole soul was broken with emotion; and I exclaimed, "Oh, the unhappy one! He wandered about an outcast, and found, perhaps, neither bread nor a home. He died, perhaps, on foreign ground, and thought of his mother, and yearned to press her hand to his lips, and to receive pardon. And she—oh, the poor—"

Ma chère mère was deadly pale, and trembled violently; she seemed with difficulty to breathe. "Franziska!" she said, at length, with a strong voice, "Franziska! cease these unnecessary lamentations! Bread he needed not want. He could work. He was a man, and already, in his growing years, strong as a lion. Home? that he did not seek. His mind drew him towards the wide world, and that has probably yielded him sufficient. But the curse!"—here she approached me, while tears trembled in her large eyes, and laid her hand upon my head—"the curse has rent my heart from him. When it was pronounced, I thirsted to call it back again; and I should have done it, Franziska, then, if he had borne patiently the punishment and the penance which his crime demanded. For that purpose I sought him in the night; but he was gone. He fled from forgiveness, and would not deserve it; but I have laid it down on his grave. There it lingers with the sun, and with the flowers, and gives him peace. Yet, sometimes, when the recollection and the anguish seize me, so that my bosom will tear asunder, and it writhes in my bones, and I know not what I do; then, at times, I utter the curse; but, after that, I bless. Or what dost thou imagine that I did, as I lay like a worm before our Lord, the picture of my son pressed to my heart? Thinkest thou that I cursed him? Peace! peace be with the dust!"

"And yet if he should live?" said I, with a feeling I cannot describe; "if he yet live; and, through many sufferings, have atoned for the sin of his youth; if he longs, more than for all the honours of the world, to receive the pardon of his mother, to clasp her once more to his breast?"

"Is it so, Franziska? hast thou heard that he lives?" and her voice trembled; "knowest thou what he seeks and intends? Tell him to come no more to the country which would be ashamed of him; that he bear not the name which he has dishonoured; that he shall not dare to come into the presence of his mother, whom he has covered with disgrace. But tell him that I have revoked the curse. I will transmit him the half of my property to a foreign land. He may write to me, and require what he will; but—on my threshold he shall not set his foot!"

I bent my knee, and embraced hers. "Mother! mother!" I exclaimed, nearly beside myself, "is that Christian? is that right?"

"Stand up!" said she, fiercely. "Not a word more. No one can judge me in this matter. What I have said, I have said; and I forbid thee to speak farther upon it. Speak not of him, if thou wilt not—Thinkest thou that here the question is of apples and pears? I tell thee, it is of reason and madness! Rouse not the evil spirit in me. Away with these remembrances, with these thoughts—away! away!"

I stood up; my heart was tossed with contending emotions; but *Ma chère mère's* wild look and her gestures showed me that now was not the time to give vent to them. Nevertheless, I would not give up all hope. I looked imploringly, with clasped hands, but she turned away from me. "Go," said she, sternly; "our discourse is at an end. I would be alone. Go—I will it!"

"I went! my soul full of bitterest anguish. *Ma chère mère* bolted the door behind me. As I entered the cabinet, I saw there a man standing with his forehead against the wall. It was Bruno. Terrified, I went to him, laid my hand gently on his arm, and said, in a low voice, "For God's sake, Bruno, what are you doing here, so near—" He turned slowly his face towards me. It was deadly pale; cold perspiration stood on his brow; his look was confused; he gazed at me with a gloomy indifference. But suddenly he collected himself, and, laying his hand on his forehead, rushed out of the room. I followed him and thanked God as I saw Bear meet him, seize his arm, and compel him to be on his guard, that the servants might suspect nothing. With apparent calmness, they left the house together.

I went, in the mean time, to Jean Jacques. I could not let the husband and wife know all that had occurred. I told them, simply, that I had produced no result; that I had not dared to give *Ma chère mère* cause to imagine how near to her son was, since the very thought of him seemed nearly sufficient to unsettle her reason. Jean Jacques stuck his hands in his coat-pockets, and went up and down the room, saying, "That is devilish, that is devilish. How can any one be so unreasonable?" And then Bruno—I implored him to remain quiet; but as soon as he heard his mother's voice, which, for a moment, was audible here, he was possessed. He tore himself away from Lars Anders, who would have held him, and dashed forth. It was well that he did not go in to *Ma chère mère*. There would have been a pretty 'larum!

Jane Maria, also, could not comprehend how it was that people could not be governed by their reason, but added, that she had anticipated how the affair would end; that she had never looked for any good effect from it.

Neither of them spoke according to my feeling. I longed for Bear; I expected comfort and support from him. At length he came; he was heated, excited, and looked woe-begone. I threw myself on his neck, and wept—I could not do otherwise. He embraced me, and said merely, "We will not let our courage sink, nor give up all as lost; no tree is felled by a single stroke."

"Ah! what shall we do?" asked I, with a deep sigh.

"We will now go home," answered he, "and then we will talk farther about it. The cabriolet is below. Adieu, Jean Jacques; adieu, sister-in-law. Come, Fanny!"

In the cabriolet, I related to Bear all that had passed between *Ma chère mère* and myself. He said merely, "Hum—hum!" Then we sat silent, but I knew that he thought with me, and

more wisely than I. It did me good to sit silently by his side, as we drove through the whispering wood. The weather was in harmony with my mood of mind. It was become dark; and the boughs of the pines swayed in the wind with a sort of sad disquiet.

"In the mean time," said Bear, consolingly, when we had reached home, "in the mean time, we have won one point. This dangerous state of apathy is broken, and will, probably, for this time, not return. This is a victory which may prepare the way for another. We won't despair. I will see Bruno to-morrow."

"In the mean time," to take up Bear's phrase, I am distressed in heart and soul, and know not what farther to say.

FRAGMENT OF A LETTER FROM BRUNO TO ANTONIO.

September 3d.

What is called long life? To drag through unimportant days, without interest and pleasure, and to sink together, by degrees, like a building that is inwardly decayed. No, rather to desire to behold a future, at least a morrow; that is life. A morrow! For me that will probably no more arise. The stream of life has turned itself away from me. Why should I linger in the desert, and thirst? Mother! mother! from thee I am repulsed! It is thou who hast dried up my heart and my world. But this night I will free myself; I will drink revenge. My mother! Is it love, is it hate to her by which I am impelled? I know not. But this night I will stand before her, and burst the ice-land of her heart; or my brain shall burst, and she shall be covered with my blood. I will awaken in her bosom—remorse! I will call into her eye a tear which shall never dry up again! She will not forgive. So be it; she shall weep. Why should I live? For whom? For what? I have drunken the wild pleasure of life—it disgusts me. To the better and the purer the way is barred; barred by my own mother. Bitter, curse-inspiring feeling! The mother's heart is closed against me; close, therefore, for me, heaven also—the bosom of God. Yes, it must be so, for all the bitterness of the world has gathered itself into my heart. I will avenge myself on my mother! And yet, in this dark moment, a mild, a refreshing sensation slides into my soul. Serena! her beloved image awakes it. She rejects me, but I cannot be angry with her. She renounced my love for the sake of her duty, she left me alone; yet my soul feels but tenderness towards her. That feeling does me good. I will never cause her woe. But as I saw her, so fair, so strong, I saw her still farther withdrawn from me. As the star grows pale in a higher light, so paled she for me, as she approached nearer to the angel. She cannot hold me back, the distance between us is too wide. And should, indeed, my death distress her, she will wrap herself in her white garb of innocence, in her saintly attire of virtue, and remain fixed and still; God is with her. Pure angel, peace be with thee! I may not press thee to my bosom, but, like thy heaven, which is thy heritage, and from which I am exiled, thou wilt, perhaps, look down upon me, and refresh my heart, since no one possesses this power like thee. Farewell! Our paths now separate forever; mine descends into the depths of darkness, thine ascends into the high light. Farewell!

Farewell, too, my dreams! ye dear dreams of a more beautiful life, of reconciliation and love.

Fare ye well, ye tender and loving feelings in my soul, which I have loved and cherished as the better part of myself! And ye tones, which I have awoke on so many nights, in order to answer the inquiries of my soul, to still its torments, sleep, sleep! I will never listen to you again. When I called you forth, I had still hope; now I have none.

No, Antonio, I have no hope. Despair lies in the depth of the question which I will yet once more put to my fate. Farewell, Antonio! Thanks for thy friendship; thanks for this, that, with all my faults, thou hast loved me. Pardon me that which I have done; be at peace with me, as I am with thee.

But thou, my mother! yet no peace with thee. Yet, in this night, I will press a kiss upon thy lips, either of life or of death. In vain dost thou withdraw thyself—thou shalt not escape. High Powers are with me—to-night!

CHAPTER XIII.

FRANZISKA WERNER TO MARIA L.

September 4th and 5th.

Oh, Maria! my dear Maria! what events, what scenes! what changes! How can one night have changed thus everything? But I must relate you all from the beginning. I have looked death in the face, death wild and horrible! Ah! it is still, indeed, near! But I must bring order into my soul and my conceptions.

For two days after my last interview with *Ma chère mère* we heard nothing of her. On the third, Bear drove over to Carlstorf, to learn how matters stood. He found that *Ma chère mère* had been in a high state of excitement, and most restless mood of mind. During the night she had been heard going to and fro in her chamber, almost incessantly; during the day she had wept bitterly. She was now somewhat more composed; she received Bear kindly, asked how his wife was, came into the drawing-room to tea, and appeared by degrees to resume her wonted manner.

The relation of her sufferings moved me. I almost longed to see her again, and to hear a friendly word from her; and I felt an actual delight, as, early next morning—it was the 3d of September—I received a little kind note from her, in which she said that in the forenoon she intended to drive to the city to purchase various "*Krimkrams*," and made me the proposal to bear her company. If I agreed, she would call upon me, and, in the evening, deliver me safe at home again.

I wanted to buy myself some funnels and a sieve, and accepted the offer with all my heart, after I had said a few words with Bear, and had promised him a good dinner at home, though I should not have the pleasure of seeing him eat it. Bear did not look at all despairing about it, embraced me, and proceeded in the cabriolet to the city, where we hoped to meet.

It was not without some uneasiness and perplexity that I now thought of seeing *Ma chère mère* again. How could it stand between us, after the last violent scene? What should I say? How should I look? From this uncertainty I was relieved by *Ma chère mère's* arrival. She did not leave the carriage, but, as I got in, she reached me her hand, with a serious, but open countenance, drew me to her, bent back my bonnet-bow, and kissed me on the forehead and mouth with great tenderness. This did me good, and

from that moment I felt all restraint was gone. Yet I was in a sad mood. *Ma chère mère* was still; the day gloomy, the air heavy. No one can say that our drive was cheerful. At the spot where the road to Ramm branches off, *Ma chère mère* turned her head in the other direction. My heart was stirred within me by this sign of an irreconcilable feeling; but, as she soon after put to me some important question, I was so struck with her ghastly paleness that I could not be angry with her, but I was so grieved that I was on the very point of weeping. So reached we the city.

"In the widow of Pastor Rhen," said *Ma chère mère*, as soon as we had got through the city gate, "thou wilt make acquaintance with a very imp of housekeeping." We descended at Madame Rhen's, where *Ma chère mère* has always, when she is in the city, a kind of inn. One cannot see the widow of Pastor Rhen without immediately feeling that she is friendliness, hospitality, and talkativeness combined; and one cannot see her daughter Renetta without thinking that the apple falls not far from the tree. One cannot see her arrangements for *Ma chère mère* without perceiving that *Ma chère mère* is, in her eyes, a great puissance, which she equally fears and loves. For her sake, I also was treated with zealous cordiality; and the good Renetta had nearly strangled me, as she took off my cloak with so much vigour, the rihands having, by my awkwardness, been drawn into a knot.

Madame Rhen had been a kind of housekeeper with *Ma chère mère*, who had betrothed and married her to the pastor, who suffered himself, in this matter, to be led by her as by his fate. Whether he had to repent it I know not. Madame Rhen was now a well-to-do widow, who placed her joy and honour in being able to entertain *Ma chère mère* when she came there, by whom she was always bluntly and plainly called "Rhen."

The kindness of Rhen and Renetta, the neat, clean room, with two little, lovely pictures, representing children playing with animals, impressed me with a very agreeable feeling. The beautiful Smaland cheese and a glass of Malaga, which were immediately set on a snow-white cloth, tasted most excellent. After our refreshment, *Ma chère mère* and I set out on our round of business. It had cleared up; the air was charming; and within me all had become more and more cheerful. There awoke in my soul I know not what glad hope; and, as the sun broke through the clouds, it seemed to me as if there could be no irremediable misfortune, and no irreconcilable hearts—I felt as if all must turn out well. Well, my dear Maria, I am like a string-instrument, perhaps a little too easily moved. But like me as I am. I like Byron, because he calls the heart "a pendulum betwixt a smile and a tear."

In the city was much throng and stir. It was market-day, and the great market-place was full of people, wagons, and carts. It delighted me thoroughly to behold the joyous swarm; it delighted me to meet Bear in the city; I promised myself a moment's time to call on Serena. All presented itself to me as lively and pleasant. The smell of the fresh hay diffused itself fragrantly from the peasant's wagons. Here the peasant lifted his smoked ham to the nose of a stopping connoisseur; there a good woman vaunted her fresh butter; here heaps of carrots lay sorted from heaps of red beet, whose fellows still lay in

green hampers; there people sold pears for a *hel-*ler apiece. There was a hum of blithe voices, of gossip and laughter; and among men, horses, and wagons, hurried about a brisk flock of sparrows, twittering here and there throughout the market, gathered the scattered manna, flew up with a whisk when a heavy fellow trod near this light troop, and then, as unweariedly, dropped themselves down again. Women, well armed with wits and tongue, sat in rows before the houses and in the market-place, with their meal-tubs, their great loaves, their baskets of pears and pastry, and rated keenly the street lads, who, as they went by, sought to indemnify themselves for their want of money with pert sayings. A spirit of joke came over me. Before me stood a ragged little boy with a good countenance, who regarded the riches of the market with a philosophical whistling. Behind him, upon a step, stood his empty basket, over which a net was thrown. I filled this dexterously with sugar-pears, and the old woman of whom I bought them lifted the net cautiously up herself, and nodded to me that she understood the whim. The youngster will long wonder to himself how these pears came there. Farther on stood a horse tied up to a window shutter, and stretched his lean head out towards some chaff, but could not reach it. I took a famous lock out of the cart and gave it to the horse, while I looked round, half in fear, at the proprietor. *Ma chère mère* laughed, and gave him another lock. The horse ate.

"Good mother, why do you tempt me with your fine plums? I must have a half measure. Here, pour them into my handkerchief. But the money? Oh, I have no small change."

The good mother must go into a shop to get change; but who shall sell the pears and plums, meanwhile? I will. The old woman goes; I set myself on her stool, sell fruit, and take money. I have no customer so difficult as *Ma chère mère*, who will have an immensity for her money, and mercilessly beats me down, and runs down the quality of my goods. I answer as well and as roughly as I can. Finally, the good woman comes back with the change, and is so satisfied with my management of her property, that I must take a quarter of a measure of plums for my services.

You will wonder at *Ma chère mère's* patience with all this. But this sort of thing delights her; and one of her qualities, which makes her so agreeable to me, is the hearty and pleasant way in which she enters into any innocent joke.

But the time fled. The clock of the church struck twelve. We must hasten, if we mean to get our business done before dinner. I glanced towards every gateway and street-corner to discover Bear, but in vain. We entered some shops, looked at various things, but bought nothing. *Ma chère mère* scolded the masters of the shops for their bad articles; they tried to raise their voices in their defence, but she raised her voice above theirs, and put them down. The clock struck one. *Ma chère mère* said, "We must not let Rhen's soup get cold." We set out back again, I quite out of humour not to have found Bear; but, in passing through the next street, what beheld I at the corner? a sight to me a thousand times more delightful than an enchanted castle and bountiful fairies—a broad, gray back, beyond all power of mistake, that of Bear. I sprang softly on him, held him fast, and said, "You shall not get away, you Bear! I take you captive. You come with me."

"And dine with us at Rhen's, and do not go away again till afternoon," added *Ma chère mère*.

Bear was not difficult to be persuaded, took the arm of his little wife, and walked with her to Madame Rhen's, giving her a moral sermon on her presumption in acting the policeman. But, though he joked, I could see that he was not glad.

Rhen and Renetta ran busily about to bring up the dinner as we entered. As they spied Bear, they sprang in raptures upon him, and their joy mounted to the very roof, at having the company of the good and cordial-hearted man. We sat down to table. The dinner was excellent, my appetite was equally so; the hostesses were pressing and communicative; I had passed a merry morning, and would fain still be cheerful, but there sat Bear with so solemn a face that it troubled me. I saw that he had Bruno in his head and heart. He now also entered mine, and all my lightness of spirit vanished; yes, I reproved myself, that I could have been so gay. Bear looked at *Ma chère mère* frequently, with a grave and piercing notice, and I observed that she sought to avoid his gaze. This power of his over her gave me pleasure. But at once she stared at him with her great dark eyes so keenly, that he was obliged to sink his little gray ones, and I could not help internally smiling at this skirmish of glances.

Immediately after coffee, Bear left us, in order yet to visit some patients, and would thence drive home. I accompanied him into the hall, since one could not enjoy any quiet in the presence of Rhen and Renetta. "Bear, thou art restless and sad," said I, anxiously, and took his hand. "I have seen Bruno to-day," he replied, "and am very much afraid that the whole business will have an unfortunate termination." "Good God!" I exclaimed. "Yes, may He help us," said Bear, "for here none else can. Bruno seems to contemplate a desperate experiment. What he has got in his head I could not drag from him. And I would not farther restrain him from battling out his own concern. What cannot be bent must sometimes be broken. But go in now, Fanny, go in. More in the evening. In the evening I shall see thee again."

Bear's words had troubled my whole soul, and the feelings of my mind were visible in my countenance, for *Ma chère mère* asked me, eagerly, if I were unwell; and my hostess exclaimed that I was so pale, so very pale. I complained of dizziness; and, in fact, everything went round with me.

Madame Rhen knocked at the window, then opened it, and cried, "Good madame! good madame!" Two gentlemen looked back, and a youth came to the window. "Madame!" said she, still louder; "madame! Ah! ah! yes, it was Madame Follin—bear you, good madame; here is a two-dollar banco; take it, be so good, and run to Bergström's and ask him for a little of his best *eau de Cologne* for Madame Rhen. There will be one dollar four-and-twenty out of it. Thank you kindly, good madame."

My hostess overwhelmed me now with kindness, *liqueur*, and perfumed water; begged me to sit by the window, and to divert my mind by looking into the street. I thanked her for her goodness, but said that the free air would soonest relieve me. *Ma chère mère* arose directly, and we went out.

We spent more than two hours with going about, and in the shops. *Ma chère mère* made me a present, far too splendid for me, but the

heartfelt expression in her countenance and manner made it dear to me. I purchased some trifles for Bear which he needed, but which he always forgot to procure for himself. We had promised to take tea with Madame Rhen; *Ma chère mère* would not allow me to give it up; and I saw, with regret, that we should not have time to see Serena. On our return to Madame Rhen's, we crossed the great market-place, which had been so lively in the forenoon. It was now deserted; and while strewn with the litter of past business, and with the birds, *Ma chère mère* was quite indignant that the besoms were not at work, and declared that she would speak to the mayor about it.

A single hay-wagon stood in a corner of the market-place, about which a multitude of people were assembled. *Ma chère mère* stood still, and asked some one, who came from the wagon, "What there was there?" "A great wolf, which had been shot," was the answer. "We must see that," said *Ma chère mère*, advanced, and made a way through the people, who, as soon as they recognised her, made room for her. I followed her, like a little boat in the wake of a frigate. When we reached the wagon, we saw there an unusually large and fine wolf. There was a strong pressure around us, but *Ma chère mère* protected me by putting her powerful arm about me, and turning herself, at the same time, to the people, said, "Don't crowd so!" which was immediately repeated by numerous voices, and we obtained ample room. The peasant to whom the wagon belonged related, in reply to *Ma chère mère*, how he had gone out early in the morning with his gun, and saw two young wolves on the border of the wood, which had laid themselves on some litter under a fir-tree. He drew near, and took aim at them. At the same moment their mother sprang out of the wood with a fierce howl, and placed herself before them. He fired, she fell, and the young ones ran off into the wood. The man hastened to the wolf; she struggled with death; and a second shot put an end to her, and he joyfully dragged his booty home. I saw that the tongue of the creature hung far out on one side, and, as I alluded to that, the countryman showed me that the tongue was nearly bitten off. She had probably done it in the agony of death, he added. For the first time I felt pity for a wolf; and I could not refrain from stroking the head of the fine animal, and saying softly, "Good mother!" "Let us go, Franziska," said *Ma chère mère*, abruptly, and we made our way back as we had made it thither. *Ma chère mère* looked gloomy; and, as we went over the market-place, I could not omit saying—for my heart was moved—"What a fine feeling must live in animals, which man considers to stand so far beneath him! A wolf dies for her young!"

"The young of the wolf," said *Ma chère mère*, in a bitter tone, "had occasioned their mother no grief; she had died in her pride of them. Better to die with a bitten tongue than live with a torn heart." We were both silent. Presently we came to a little green, on which fine poplars reared their quivering pyramids. The sun, in its setting, burnished them with deep gold, and a number of little birds filled them with the music of their songs. Seats were here placed, that the passers-by might enjoy their shade. On one of those benches sat two persons, who attracted our attention; one of them was an aged woman, evidently poor, but of a good-natured countenance, and dressed with extraordinary neatness. Near

her sat a man, equally neatly clad, with a long, pale face, hanging lips, and the aspect of one of weak intellect. *Ma chère mère*, who possesses a tolerable portion of curiosity, approached them. As we drew near, we saw that the man was blind. "Is that your brother, good woman?" asked *Ma chère mère*. "My son," answered the woman, with a sigh. "Son! how old is he?" "Twenty-five years." He looked fifty. "He is blind, and, as I fancy, also deaf," continued *Ma chère mère*. "Blind, and deaf, and dumb," answered the mother. "How long has he been in this condition?" "Since his birth." "Has he any sort of ideas?" "That is difficult to perceive; one must guide, feed, tend, and watch him, like a child; but sometimes he weeps, and sometimes he laughs." "What makes him laugh?" "When he comes out into the air he is cheerful and laughs, and when I caress him long. Thank God, he knows me!" Hereupon she began kindly to stroke the cheeks of her son, and to pat him on the shoulder. He smiled, on that, with increasing liveliness and gladness, and his countenance assumed almost an expression of reason. "Is he sometimes ill-humoured?" "Yes, often; and then he is quite raging. But still he has a good heart. He sleeps very little by night, and then is accustomed to grope his way round to the beds of his sister's children, and to feel whether they are covered. If they have thrown off their bedclothes, he spreads them carefully over them. He is especially careful of the sister's little daughter; and when he perceives her cry, he is beside himself."

"You must, therefore, be obliged to keep him in your eye more than all your other children!"

"Yes, of necessity. They have understanding, but he has only me. I can very rarely leave him."

At this moment the deaf and dumb made some horrible sounds; they were a kind of howl, but the howl of a wild beast is nothing to such as these. Tears started from the blind eyes, and copiously wet his face, which, besides this, showed no expression of pain. The poor wretch wiped them away with his hands.

"And this has continued for twenty-five years, and may continue yet longer?" asked *Ma chère mère*, with a tone of voice which made evident how deeply it had seized on her mind. "Are you not tired, good woman?"

"No; with the help of God shall I never be tired with my child, but patiently await the time when it shall please the Lord to release us. May I only not die before him!"

"What is your name, good woman?"

"Margaret Beck, widow of Beck the joiner."

"Good-morning, Madame Beck. God bless you! We shall meet again."

Ma chère mère went on, while she said, half aloud, to herself, "Twenty-five years!"

I said nothing, but hoped within myself that this circumstance might not be without its effect upon her own heart. We walked on for some time silently and slowly, and *Ma chère mère* looked hastily up, appeared to rouse herself out of her reverie, and, half reproachfully, half briskly, said, "Thou movest like a tortoise, Franziska, and thus we go dreaming away our time. We must now hasten to Rhen's and drink our tea quickly, that we may not have to reach home in the dark."

But to get away quickly from Madame Rhen and her tea was impossible. There was no end of handling and pressing on you of biscuits.

cracknels, tea-cakes, and ginger-bread; and the good old lady now began even to talk of supper, and said she had purposely ordered a good fat turkey, and hoped that Madame Mansfeld would consent to stay, and not give her the disappointment of seeing her little preparation was fruitless. I expected to see it at once declined by *Ma chère mère*, but, to my great astonishment, she answered neither yes nor no; and, as Madame Rhen began to speak, in her zeal, of a clear evening and moonlight, and, I verily believe, of sunshine and the Northern Lights, *Ma chère mère* said, at length, with great coolness, "Well, well, we will see." Madame Rhen took this as an acquiescence, gave Renetta a hint, and followed her herself into the kitchen. I seized this opportunity to tell *Ma chère mère* of my fear of our driving home in the dark; but, when I turned towards her, I saw her sitting with her elbows on the table, and her face covered with her hands, in one of those fits of melancholy of which I had so often heard, but till now had never been an eyewitness of. I neither would nor dared to disturb her, and we both sat profoundly silent till Madame Rhen entered with lights, accompanied by Renetta, who brought in the roast, and preserved cherries. *Ma chère mère*, on this, changed her position, but continued gloomy and silent. I myself was by no means talkative, but the lively hostess did not concern herself on that account. She and her daughter talked away incessantly, told stories, interrupted each other, and mutually drowned each other's voices in their eagerness. All the gossip, all the little intrigues of the city were touched on, and drawn out into long histories. I could not help being amused by some of these, and I was more than once obliged to laugh, as well as the zeal of the relaters as at the relations themselves, which, on this, went on more vigorously than ever. I know not whether *Ma chère mère* heard anything of all this, or not; her thoughts seemed to me to be internally directed, and I wondered to see her address herself so effectually to the turkey, and finally, with some hearty phrases, commended Rhen's supper.

I was thoroughly wearied of all the eating and the talk. I longed to be at home, and with Bear, and said, "God be thanked!" as we were once more seated in the carriage. In the mean time it was become very dark; and, instead of the lights and shines which Madame Rhen had promised us, the heaven had put on a gray mantle of cloud, which did not permit even the faintest glimpse of a star to pass through. But on the western horizon it lightened strong and frequently, although without thunder. It was what is called sheet lightning. *Ma chère mère* took the reins from the boy, who sat behind, where we soon heard him snore.

The evening was warm and still; and this drive, by the radiance of the lightning, would not have been disagreeable to me, but I was in an anxious mood, and, besides this, somewhat fearful; for the darkness was sometimes so deep that we could not distinguish the way, and *Ma chère mère* had not her accustomed vigilance. She appeared to be in an excited state of mind, and often lifted her handkerchief to her face. This her uneasiness did me good, but at the same time filled me with disquiet as it regarded our progress. We went, however, securely on, if not at the quickest pace; and, notwithstanding my fear, notwithstanding all uneasy and anxious thoughts, by the slow driving and easy rocking of the carriage I became, at last, very sleepy. I nodded, and

dreamed I know not how long, but was suddenly awakened by a violent shock from the carriage striking against some stump or stone. I looked round—we were in a dark and thick wood. My spirits sunk. It seemed to me that we had driven already long enough to have reached home.

"It is to be hoped that we are really on the right way," said I, doubtfully. "It appears to me that we must have driven quite long enough. I hope we haven't gone wrong."

At these words *Ma chère mère* seemed to wake out of a dream; and said, sharply, and as somewhat offended, "Make yourself easy, dear child, when I drive. Ought not I and my horses to know the way that we have traversed so often? We have gone it together these fifteen years, and have never missed our way yet."

She let the horses feel the whip, and they went quicker. I was still anxious, and fancied, by the light of the somewhat clearer sky, that all around us looked strange and wild. "I cannot conceive where we can be," said I, at length, unable any longer to conceal my uneasiness. "I cannot recognise anything around us. A wood so lofty and thick as this there certainly is not on the way to Carlsfors."

"Don't be a fool, Franziska," said *Ma chère mère*, quite out of temper, "and don't see ghosts where there are none. By night the wood appears twice as high and as thick as by day. I cannot exactly see where we are, but I observe that my animals scent home and their stable. They never run thus but when we are near Carlsfors; and hark, how they snort! See, are we not in the great avenue? Yes, certainly, we are just there. I fancy I see the house itself glimmer out yonder."

We were now certainly in an avenue. *Ma chère mère* put on the horses, and they flew every moment more rapidly forward. Now came one great and tremendous blaze of lightning, which lasted some seconds; and by its light reared itself, like a gigantic spectre, out of the blackness of the night, a huge and gloomy house, not Carlsfors, but—Ramm! Ramm, with its dark facade, and its great wings, lay before us in the glare of the lightning. It stretched, as it seemed, its threatening arms towards us; and every instant we were drawn nearer and nearer towards it.

I looked with terror at *Ma chère mère*. She sat as if changed to stone. Her gaze was fixed and staring; the reins dropped from her hands. All was night again, but only for a few seconds. Again came a flash so great and vivid, that trees, bushes, and buildings, appeared all in flame. In this moment stood a tall, dark figure suddenly before us. The horses, terrified, and no longer restrained by a guiding hand, flew right and left, and over lawn and shrubbery, dashed downward towards the lake, which shone out by the lightning-gleam clear among the trees.

With convulsive hands *Ma chère mère* endeavoured to recover the reins, which had fallen. I screamed, "Help! help!" with all the force of my desperation. Then sprung some one before the horses and seized the reins. I saw the horses rear; saw some one struggling with them—by the glare of the now incessant lightning I recognised Bruno. I saw him thrown down by the horses; it seemed to me that they went over his body; more I saw not, for I lost my consciousness.

When I came to myself again, I found myself in *Ma chère mère's* arms. I saw her pale countenance.

tenance over me; its expression of anguish and tenderness I shall never forget. "God be praised! she recovers!" said *Ma chère mère*, and impressed a motherly kiss on my forehead. A lofty rotunda arched itself above us, lighted by a lamp from above. A tall and very dark woman, whom I had never before seen, stood near me, and handed me a strong cordial. My senses were confused, and I could not recall into my memory what had just now occurred; but, in this darkness of thought and of vision, I sought for Bruno. In the gloomiest corner of the chamber stood—was it the bloody spectre which my terrified imagination had evoked? or was it an actual human shape? My eyes fixed themselves inquiringly upon it; it came forward—it was Bruno! But, gracious heavens! what a spectacle! Blood streamed down from his brow, and down upon his naked breast; his clothes were torn to rags; his cheeks were deadly pale; wild disquiet burned in his eyes; in the strongly-contracted eyebrows lightnings seemed to conceal themselves, and desperate determination pressed the lips together. He approached us. At a hint from him that strange woman withdrew, and we three were left alone. I tore myself from *Ma chère mère's* arms, and sat upon the sofa. My whole consciousness was come back; my whole soul was vehemently on the stretch, and, with the most indescribable anxiety, I observed both mother and son, who now stood face to face. Their looks seemed to pierce through each other. *Ma chère mère* seemed to be smitten with the wildest amazement, and stepped a little backward. Bruno stepped a step forward, and said, slowly, and as with a benumbed tongue, "You are rescued. God be praised! And for me now only remains to die, or to win forgiveness! My mother! my mother!" exclaimed he at once, as if an angel had loosened tongue and feeling, while, with a heart-rending expression, he sank down and embraced her knees. "My mother, wilt thou not pardon? Wilt thou not bless thy son? Take the curse from my brow. Mother! I have suffered much. I have wandered about without peace; I am destitute of peace yet; peace can never be mine while I am thrust from thy bosom. I have suffered; I have suffered much; I have repented; I can and will atone. But then you must pardon, you must bless me, mother. Mother, take away the curse! Lay a blessing on my head! Mother, will you not stanch the blood which flows on your account? See, mother!" and Bruno raised his clotted locks, through which deep and streaming wounds were visible. "See, mother, if thou wilt not lay thy hand here in blessing, I swear, by God! that this blood-stream shall never cease till my life has welled out with it, and has sunk me to the grave, on which alone thou wilt lay thy forgiveness. There, there, first shall I find peace. Oh, mother! was an error in young and wild years, then, so unpardonable? Cannot a later life of virtue and of love make atonement? Mother! cast me not off! Let the voice of thy son penetrate to thy heart! Bestow on me forgiveness, full forgiveness!"

Overcome by my feelings, I threw myself on my knees to Bruno, and cried, "Pardon! pardon!"

What during this time, passed in *Ma chère mère's* heart, I know not. It seemed to be a contest of life and death. She moved not; with a fixed and immovable gaze, she looked down at the kneeling one, and convulsive twitches passed over her pale lips. But, as his voice ceased, she

lifted her hand and pressed it strongly against her heart. "My son! oh!" said she, with a hollow voice. She sighed deeply; her countenance became yellow, her eyes closed, she reeled, and would have fallen to the ground, if Bruno had not sprung up and caught her in his arms.

He stood a moment still, his mother pressed to his bosom, and gazed on her countenance, over which death had shed his awful peace. "Is it thus," said he, in a quiet distraction, "is it thus, then, we are reconciled, mother? Thus thou restest on the bosom of thy son, and he on thine? Thou art pale, my mother, but peaceful, and lookest kind—kind as God's propitiation. It was not thus that I saw thee the last time; but the hour of wrath is over—is it not so, my mother? The grave has opened itself, and we go down there reconciled, and heart to heart; one in my last hour, as we were one at my first sigh!" And he kissed her pale lips and cheeks with passionate tenderness.

"Bruno! Bruno!" I exclaimed, imploringly, and, weeping, seized his arm. "Bruno, you kill your mother and yourself, when you go on in this manner. Come, we will lay her on a bed. We must endeavour to recall her to consciousness; we must bind your wounds."

Bruno made no answer, but took his mother in his arms and carried her into another room, where he laid her softly down upon a bed. "Hagar!" he called; and that tall, dark woman immediately stepped in. She threw herself at his feet; weeping, kissed his hand; and addressed him passionately and imploringly, in a language which I did not understand. He thrust her sternly from him; and I understood that he commanded her to exert herself for *Ma chère mère*. She obeyed, with sobs and tears. I saw that Bruno staggered, and supported himself against the wall. I went to him.

"Bruno," said I, "for your mother's sake, think of yourself. You must allow your wounds to be bound up."

He seized a light sofa, and drew it forward, so that it stood just opposite to the bed on which his mother lay, and threw himself upon it. His head lay opposite to hers, and he fixed his eyes upon her. Hagar and I came between them. In broken Swedish, and in great agitation of mind, Hagar said to me, "Bind, bind up his wounds, or he dies!"

I folded a cloth, dipped it in cold water, and said to Bruno, "For your mother's sake, let me bind your wounds as well as I can, or you will bleed to death." I was proceeding, but he held my hand back, and said, with a tone whose severity strongly reminded me of his mother, "It cannot be done. She has not yet forgiven me—not yet blessed me. My blood shall not, till then, be stanchd! I have sworn to it."

To persuade Bruno was not to be expected; I therefore directed all my attention to *Ma chère mère*. But for a long time all my endeavours to restore her to consciousness were in vain. It was a moment of unspeakable agony. I feared that actually mother and son would follow one another to the grave.

"If we could but get her bled," said I.

"That can be done," replied Hagar, and ran out.

Nearly in the same instant *Ma chère mère* opened her eyes, and fixed them sharply on me. "Where is he?" demanded she, eagerly; "I have not dreamed!"

"He is here," I answered; "he is near; he is

bleeding to death, while he awaits the blessing of his mother."

"Where is he?" demanded she again.

I stood near her pillow; I stood between mother and son; and, instead of answering her question, I drew myself back, and their eyes met each other. A beam of heavenly light, of ineffable love, kindled in them; and in it melted their souls into one. She raised herself with energy, and stretched out her hand with the warmest expression of maternal feeling, while she said, "My son, come hither; I will bless thee!"

He stood up. The tall, gigantic man staggered like a child, and sunk on his knees by the bed of his mother. She laid her hands on his bloody head, and said, with a strong voice, and a deep solemnity, "I take away the curse which I once laid on the head of my son. I bestow on him my full forgiveness. May the man atone for the error of the youth. Let the past be as if it had never been. I acknowledge that I owe my life to my son; and I pray God Almighty to bless thee, my son, Bruno Mansfeld, as I bless thee now. Amen!" With that, she opened her arms; he clasped his round her; bosom was pressed to bosom, lip to lip; they held one another in a long and close embrace. Every breath seemed to be full of reconciliation, of love, and happiness. Fifteen years of bitter pangs were, in this moment, recompensed and forgotten. I stood near them, and wept for joy and thankfulness.

Hagar's return interrupted this moment of pure transport. Bruno again kissed, with deep love, the hand of his mother, then arose, and cried out, joyfully, "Now bind my wounds! Stop the blood! I have my mother's blessing!"

He seated himself, and let us do just what we pleased, and was good and quiet as a friendly child. Hagar attended on him with great skill, and succeeded in stopping, in some measure, the flow of blood. In the mean time, I procured writing materials, and hastened to send a note to Bear, to inform him of what had taken place. The whole house was in motion, and it was easy to find a messenger, who betook himself immediately across the lake to Rosenvik. I then returned again to the reconciled ones. Bruno's wounds were bound up. He was very pale, but still, and his countenance had an expression of peace and happiness which I saw for the first time in it. *Ma chère mère*, on the contrary, appeared powerfully excited, although she endeavoured to be quiet. Her whole frame trembled, as with excessive cold, but her eyes were mild and tender; she scarcely ever removed them from her son.

"Hear, now, what I have to beg of you," said I to them both. "If you would live for each other, you must consent to separate for a short time, and must each endeavour to get some rest. Bruno, cannot you allow yourself to be conducted to the next chamber? Won't *Ma chère mère* oblige her Franziska?"

But *Ma chère mère* answered, "Who knows how long mother and son have yet to live? It may soon be all over; separate us not."

"Separate us not," replied Bruno, with a faint voice.

"But, at least, you must take something composing. Why would you not live for one another?"

Hagar put a vial containing an opiate into my hand. *Ma chère mère*, however, refused to take any; Bruno put it to his mouth and drank.

He must have been accustomed to this means of stupefaction.

"I will willingly remain alone with my son," said *Ma chère mère*. "When he sleeps, I will watch over him. I have done it formerly, and in this very room. Thou, Franziska, needest rest. Go, my child, and endeavour to sleep. But hear: first let it be seen that my bays are well cared for. A greater service than they have rendered me to-night they have never rendered me these fifteen years. Do that, Franziska. Good-night, my child."

I went out and saw that *Ma chère mère's* commands were executed. The bays were eating their oats in their stalls; the little lackey sat in the kitchen with a great piece of bread and butter in his hand. From him I heard a long and not very lucid relation of how the carriage had been on the very point of upsetting into the lake; how the strange gentleman had been so much hurt by the horses, but yet had mastered them; how *Ma chère mère* had carried me into the house, &c. After I had heard all this, I took a cup of coffee, and ordered that a cup should be taken to *Ma chère mère*, who loves coffee.

Refreshed by this warm and inspiring beverage, I went—not to bed. No, I was far too much excited, too restless; and felt an indescribable desire to breathe the free air, and to see God's heaven. I saw it. I thought I had never beheld it more beautiful; oh! it expanded itself now over reconciled and happy hearts. It was cloudy, but the clouds were growing momentarily thinner, and through them glanced the friendly blue, and the air was indescribably pure and mild. I seated myself on the great stone steps, and thought on the reconciled ones. Sanguine flames flew up from the horizon, and flushed the gray clouds; these mirrored themselves ruddily in the lake, and the windows of the dark house became illuminated, one after another, as with an incarnadine light, by the glow of the morning-red. A soft wind went sighing through the lofty oaks, and bending their lofty heads. All besides was still. Thus sat I long, and felt deep enjoyment; thought much, and lived over much, in these moments. Never had existence appeared to me so beautiful and full of interest; never had I more intensely loved, more confidently believed in the operation of a Divine Power in life; never had I enjoyed more exalted being than in this hour. I shall never forget it! I thought of Bear with tenderness and pride. I felt myself happy to live for him. I thought on the future; and marvellous feelings, presentiments full of joy and sorrow, arose in my soul; later may I, perhaps, speak farther of them.

I perceived the approach of some one behind me. I turned, and on the steps beheld Hagar, who, with an expression of great anxiety, her hands crossed on her bosom, drew near me, and, in her broken Swedish, asked, "What think you? Will he live? Say, oh say that he will live!"

"I believe—I hope it," I answered. "My husband is a physician; he will soon be here, and will devote all his care to him."

Hagar left me, wound her naked arms round one of the granite columns of the portico, and pressed her brow against it. When she had stood thus for a moment, she raised her head and looked towards the east, where the morning-red now burned in all its glory. I had not before regarded Hagar attentively. I did it now, and was astonished at her beauty. She was no longer young, and the features were too marked,

but they were of the purest form; though the voluptuous and full lips reminded one too much of the characteristic, and, to my taste, unpleasant peculiarity of the Hebrew form of countenance.

The dark hue of the face was now illumined by the roseate fire of the morning sun; the black and uncovered hair fell neglected on the shoulders. I forgot, for a moment, everything else in the observation of this figure, which seemed grown into union with the granite pillar. The expression of the countenance was full of passion and grief.

After some moments, Hagar left her position and approached me. "Believe you," asked she, stretching her arm towards the east, "believe you that He who causes that light to ascend also hears the prayers of men?"

"Yes, I believe it," I replied, with quiet confidence.

"And answers them?"

"When they proceed from a pure heart, and He, in his wisdom, finds it good."

Hagar was silent for a moment, bowed her head, and said, "If you have a clean heart, pray for him who bleeds within. Pray that he may live."

"You take a warm interest in him," said I, not without curiosity. "You are, perhaps, nearly connected with him; or—"

She cast a penetrating look at me, and then said, with an expression full of pride and pain, "Hagar was a handmaid. At one time she was loved by her master, and for his sake she forsook all, and went forth with him into strange, cold lands; then cast he her off for another woman; but her heart was true to him, and, in the wilderness into which she was cast forth, she prayed for him to the Lord of heaven."

"Hagar," said I, taking up her words, "was not alone in the wilderness. When she turned in her affliction to God, he commanded a well of fresh water to spring up for her."

Hagar shook her head in a mournful skepticism, laid a finger on her mouth, while with the other hand she pointed to the house, and left me in haste.

I was in the act to follow her, for I found the air now to become colder, but I continued standing; for—for—what thinkest thou I perceived now in the avenue, whipping and trotting this way on a panting steed, fluttering through the wood like a great fly-flap? No other than my good, longed-for Bear! I scarcely dared believe my own eyes, since it was impossible that the messenger could already have arrived; and, besides, why came he so miserably mounted, and not perfectly at his ease, in a boat over the lake? I was ready to dispute the evidence of my own eyes, but he came continually nearer; it was impossible longer to doubt. He dismounted, and I flew towards him, as he towards me.

"Art thou really my own dear Bear, and no fly-flap?" I exclaimed, as I embraced him with transport.

"Art thou really my own wife, and no half-crazed moonshine princess, who sits there—"

"Ah! Bear, we have no time to joke. Say, how camest thou here? Dost thou know what has happened? Hast thou received my note? But why camest thou on horseback? How warm thou art! Ah! come in, Bear, and I will tell thee all, and hear all thou hast to say."

"My sweet child! thou hast sometimes such a horrible *flux de bouche*; now, God be praised that thou art alive, and hast the gift of speech;"

and, with tears in his honest eyes, the good man held me long pressed to his heart.

As we went in, I related shortly how things here stood, and learned from Bear how he had come hither. He was become uneasy at my long stay, and, fearing that some accident had occurred, he prepared to set out for the city; and, having had the luck to break the cabriolet, he mounted the horse, and rode off, like another Don Quixote, in quest of his Dulcinea. On the way he met a servant from Ramm, who had also business in the city, and learned from him that *Ma chère mère* had got hither, and also a certain other lady, and that both were alive. "More," said Bear, "I did not hear. I gave the gray the whip, and here I am." We embraced again, in our joy at this double reunion, and Bear went in to the patients.

I followed him not, but went and made myself at home in the kitchen, and saw a hearty breakfast prepared for him. The good people showed me thorough good-will in fulfilling my commands, and, in half an hour, I had a table set out in the hall, with hot coffee, bread and butter, and a dish of delicious beefsteaks. My very mouth watered on Bear's behalf. While I was still busy arranging the table, the good man entered, with a pale, serious, but contented countenance.

"Now, how do you find matters?" asked I, in breathless eagerness; "but no, say nothing; sit down and eat; only one word—look affairs well or ill?"

"With Bruno, well, I hope. The loss of blood is great; the wounds are deep, but, so far as I can at present see, not dangerous. With *Ma chère mère* it is not well; at least not yet; but it may be. I fancy thou canst go in, Fanny; and, in the mean time, I will send a messenger to the city for sundry requisites."

"And the coffee—and the beefsteak!" I exclaimed, in consternation.

"I cannot think about them at present," replied Bear, and hastened out of the room, with a look at the beefsteak as if the devil himself had taken flesh and blood in order to tempt him. I covered, with a sigh, the warm beefsteak with a plate, and went in to *Ma chère mère*. Scarcely had I passed the door, when I saw, with amazement, how Bear had lorded it there. What I had attempted in vain to effect by solicitations he had ordered and settled at once. Bruno had been conveyed into the room adjoining that in which *Ma chère mère* lay, Hagar was beside him, and the door stood open between the rooms. As I entered, *Ma chère mère* extended her hand, drew me towards her, and embraced me with a tenderness which deeply moved me. "Franziska," said she, "the Lord has changed my heart. Before, all was so dark, so strange; now, all feels so clear and comfortable. Wonderful are the ways of the Lord! Who can comprehend them? Who can climb into the council-chamber of God? Thus have I a son again, Franziska! I am not childless; Bruno will make amends for what he has done amiss. He will yet do honour to his mother and his native land. The Bible is right—a man may fall seven times, and yet rise again. Franziska, and he was so long near me, and I did not know it! My senses were blinded, and my heart shut up, but the Lord has opened its sluices. Thy husband, Franziska, has exercised his tyranny here, and I have allowed him to do it, because he asserted that, otherwise, he could not answer for the life of Bruno; but

will see my son again to-day, and no one need think of preventing me. I will see him! Who knows how long I may see him in this world?"

"Long, very long, I hope, if *Ma chère mère* will do everything that Bear prescribes."

"See there, now, how the good wife boasts of her husband, and counts him for omnipotent. But the Lord does as he wills, Franziska."

"Do you feel ill, mother?" I asked, tenderly, and with anxiety.

"No—not ill, but I feel strangely. I have no strength in my legs. I cannot stand. There is a conflict, a disturbance within me, which seems to me as if it preceded death. The Lord's will be done! I have been permitted to bless my son, and he will close my eyes. I can die in peace."

"Mother, you will not die; no, no!" exclaimed I, eagerly—"follow only, in all things, Bear's prescriptions."

Ma chère mère, smiling, made a sort of disdainful motion with her hand, and lay still, her eyes turned towards the door of Bruno's room. Rejoiced as I was over her disposition of mind, I was equally uneasy as to her state of health. She appeared to me feverish, and there was something fixed and dry in her look. The powerful bursts of tears, which are wont to accompany great agitation of feeling in her, had been, in this case, absent. The storm had wholly diverted itself inward. "Go and see whether he sleeps," said she, pointing towards Bruno's room.

I went; he lay actually in a quiet slumber. He was very pale, but he seemed to me more handsome than ever. The brows so often drawn together were now parted, and swept in mild lines over the great arch of the eyes. A tear glittered on his colourless cheek. Opposite to him, her arm supported against the bedpost, and her head on her hand, stood Hagar, her gaze fixed immovably on his face. Her rich black locks fell down over her arm, and left only to view the profile of her countenance. Again was I compelled to admire her regular and Oriental beauty. She saw me not, and I softly returned to *Ma chère mère*, and said, "He sleeps." "Heaven bless his sleep!" she replied.

Soon afterward I heard somewhat move in the hall, and, immediately thinking of Bear, I begged *Ma chère mère* to excuse me a minute. It was Bear. He had made an attack on the beefsteak, but yet was not so much occupied with it as not to become aware of my entrance, and to extend to me heartily his hand. I placed myself near him; saw him despatch his breakfast, and rejoiced myself in his excellent appetite. When the first vigour of this was abated, I began more fully to relate the occurrences of the night. To say the truth, it seemed to me as if, during this night, on many occasions, I had shown myself half a heroine, and I wished Bear properly to feel this, and I was at some trouble to extract a little commendation from him. But, to my mortification, he was invincibly dumb, and only at times made abominable grimaces, which, I fancy, were meant for bulwarks against the outbreaks of tears; but when I came to the reconciliation, then they burst forth. Two great tears fell, and diluted his beefsteak gravy. In the mean time I paused a while, to give the good man opportunity to fall into ecstasies over his wife. But I heard not a word. When, however, I arrived at my administering of the opiate, he broke out suddenly, "Nay, this was the most crazy of all! Opium to a man that is dying of exhaustion!"

I was like one fallen from the clouds. I sat with open mouth, but could not speak.

"No, that was not the craziest," muttered Bear; "the most crackbrained of all was for a married woman, of thirty years of age, from whom one would have expected more sense, to seat herself, at midnight, on a stone step, in the open air, like a mad woman."

"Oh, thou most abominable of all Bears!" I at length exclaimed, again regaining my voice; "every word that thou speakest is false. In the first place, I am no thirty years' old woman; and in the second—"

"In the second, third, and last," cried Bear, embracing me, "thou art my own wife; and I promise thee that, if it happens again that thou art so thoughtless, I will be very angry with thee."

Did you ever hear the like, Maria? For my part, I was so surprised by such an overturning of all my hopes of praise, that I fell quite out of the conceit, and became as still as a good sheep. This naturally pleased my lord and Bear very well, and now he tyrannised farther, and compelled me to go to rest, during which time he would attend to the patients, and make the necessary arrangements for them. What was to be done? I must obey, and I acknowledge that I reaped the benefit of it. In a little lovely cabinet, which lay on the other side of the saloon, I enjoyed some hours of sweet refreshing sleep. When I awoke, I saw Hagar's head thrust in at the door. Her countenance beamed with a joy that seemed to border on wildness. "He will live! he will live!" she exclaimed to me. She stooped over me, and kissed passionately, many times, my hand, raised herself again, went to and fro in the room, smote her hands together, and laughed almost convulsively; while she exclaimed, "He will live! he will live!"

She made a strange impression on me. The wild and passionate i. e. her nature, associated with the ideas which I entertained of her connexion with Bruno, excited my aversion, while her love and beauty irresistibly attracted me.

When I entered the saloon it was full of people. There was Elsa, with a whole load of things for her mistress; there was Tüttin; there was Jean Jacques and Jane Maria. Bear stood like a pacha—if a pacha ever stands—in the middle of the saloon, answering inquiries, issuing commands, sending hither and thither. To my great amazement and joy, I heard that *Ma chère mère* had been bled. She had willingly consented to this proposal of Bear. Singularly enough, she has faith in surgery, but the most insuperable distrust to medicine, and will on no condition take it. After the bleeding she had had more rest, but, as yet, no sleep.

I had now to relate to Jean Jacques and Jane Maria all that had occurred, and the manner with which they received it gave me sincere pleasure. They were both touched, and cordially glad at the reconciliation, although this will essentially change their prospects. Elsa interrupted our conversation, to call me into *Ma chère mère*. I found Bear with her.

"He wishes that I should sleep," said *Ma chère mère*, not without sadness; "he wishes that I should close my eyes in rest, and I have not yet by the light of day beheld my only son; he who has just ventured his own life to save mine. But I tell you that, till I have seen him, I can have no rest, neither in soul nor body; and, had I but strength in my legs I would, so fetch me the hangman! ask nobody's leave."

"Bear!" said I, aside to him, "hinder her not. Let her have her will. The will of man is, indeed, his kingdom of heaven."

"Dear child, dear child, with thy kingdoms of heaven," said Bear, with a fierce grimace, and rubbed his head, "such kingdoms of heaven may lead to hell, or, at least, to death, if they are permitted at improper times."

"But thou thyself seest that here will certainly be no kingdom of heaven, if *Ma chère mère* have not her will. And that, too, is perfectly natural. I should be, in her place, exactly the same. Let her see her son; Bruno, indeed, can come to her."

"Nay, the devil! he must not to-day stir from the spot. If they must of necessity see one another, and agitate one another, then it will be better that she be moved to him. It is inconceivable that people care not—"

"Don't stand there talking," said *Ma chère mère*, passionately, "but come hither; and, if you have any reason and feeling, help me to my son. I promise that the interview shall be short, and that we will not speak."

Bear resisted no longer. He raised her on one side, Elsa and I on the other, and thus carried her, and set her in a great easy-chair by Bruno's bedside. It was a silent, but affecting scene. We saw in both how complete the reconciliation was. When *Ma chère mère* had sat thus probably ten minutes, she laid her hand, as it were in blessing, on Bruno's forehead and breast. He would have spoken, but she laid, in prohibition, her hands on his lips. A tear bedewed his cheek. Oh, how I longed to see such a one in the eyes of the mother! but they continued dry, although they were full of love. She gave us a sign that she would be removed; and it was high time, for she was violently affected, and deadly pale.

When she was again in her bed, she lay for a moment still, and, with folded hands, seemed to pray. She then beckoned me to her, and said, with a proud joy, "How large he is grown! a handsome man, Franziska! I can now see that he is very like my husband—a real Hercules! Nay, nay, he is descended from nothing weakly or ugly, on either the father or mother's side. But all this is foolish," added she, with a sigh, which was meant to be humble; "therein consists not the worth of man."

Ma chère mère allowed Jean Jacques and Jane Maria now to come in, and was very friendly towards them. When Jane Maria understood that I was to continue at Ramm so long as *Ma chère mère* remained there, she became quite short towards me, and took a cold leave. That gives me pain. But, so far as I am concerned, I must prepare myself to continue here so long as *Ma chère mère* is ill. She and Bear wish it, nor I the less so. I could not possibly leave her, so long as her state is at all doubtful. "If she could only sleep," says Bear, "all danger would be over." But sleep comes not in her eyes, and an internal restlessness wears her. I have written this during the two days which I have spent here, and during those two days she has not slept a moment, and persists in her refusal to take anything. Even Bruno's entreaties in this case have no influence over her. Medicine, she says, has always been poison to her. I have my desk in her chamber; she hears with pleasure the slight scratching of my pen; she says it quiets her. *Bruno is better, but is not allowed to move, nor scarcely to speak. Bear is really a very*

strict doctor, that I see. I almost think I shall not have him for mine. I told him this; but he only made a contemptuous grimace, and said, "That we shall soon see." I know not how I can write in so gay a mood; *Ma chère mère's* condition distresses me much—but I have so many things to divert my attention; and, besides this, *Ma chère mère* herself is in so fresh and happy a humour, that I cannot be otherwise than glad on account of it. God only grant that this circumstance have no sorrowful end! May I be able in my next letter to say that all here is, indeed, as joyful as it now is well.

CHAPTER XIV.

Ramm, September 6th.

I AM completely inundated with inquiries, notes, and visits. The rumour of what has taken place flies about, and has changed the whole neighbourhood into a committee of inquiry. All stream hitherward. Everybody asks, wonders, hopes, and congratulates. *Ma chère mère* appears to be the highest notability of the country. Even the mayor and counsellors of the city have sent to inquire how she is. She has, by degrees, come to be regarded as half a magistrate herself, since she so emphatically exerts herself against all disorders in the city, and gives occasionally, to the mayor and council, good dinners.

The state of *Ma chère mère*, alas! continues exactly the same. It is now three days since she has slept, and Bear is very much troubled about it; which, however, I rather see than hear. At this moment I receive a note from Serena, which I here transcribe.

"Good Franziska, give me a word, and, if possible, a consolatory one. There run such marvellous reports! People say that Madame Mansfield has been in great danger; that Mr. — (you know who I mean) rescued her from it; that she has acknowledged him as her son; that they are reconciled, but both have been nigh to death. It is said that he is yet in danger. So much, and with such confusion, is related. I sought you yesterday at Rosenvik, but you were not there; you were at Ramm, Sissa said. Your flowers looked out of spirits. I endeavoured to refresh them with water, which succeeded; but I also, Fanny, am out of spirits, and all which, since yesterday, I have read to grandpapa is Latin for me. My good, dear Fanny, send a cheering word to thy
SERENA."

Yes, Serena! not merely one word, but many shalt thou have. I reproach myself for not having prevented thy wish. Good heart! who would not give thee comfort? I leave you a moment, Maria, in order to write to Serena.

Still.

Still the same, and the same! No sleep—no rest. An inveterate watchfulness—an incessant, internal restlessness, which, for those who are about *Ma chère mère*, is something indescribably painful. She herself is now fully persuaded that she shall die, and has to-day made her will. I was present, and must, indeed, admire her immovable sense of right, as well as the conscientious truth with which she embraces everything which in any manner is placed beneath her protection. Remarkable is also the thorough knowledge which she has of all the smallest affairs, and the exactness and perspicuity with which she regulates whatever concerns them. It is as

iron regularity, which descends even to littleness; but, in taking leave of earthly concerns, this is worthy of respect. *Ma chère mère* showed herself, on this occasion, as she had done her whole life through, strict, upright, and systematic; benevolent without boasting, firm in friendship, and grateful.

At the same time, I cannot bring myself to believe that she will die. Bear appears rather to fear for her understanding. He speculates on giving her a sleeping-potion; but how she is to be persuaded to drink it is another matter. She herself will not hear it said that she shall live. She has, as she says, taken her resolution, and has fully resigned herself to death, and thinks only how best to prepare herself for it.

9th.

A singular scene! What strange ideas can there not enter into people's heads! This morning *Ma chère mère* ordered a joiner to be sent for—nobody could conceive wherefore. When he arrived, she sent for him into her chamber, and commanded him to measure her for—her coffin.

She gave the most particular directions as to the ornaments of the coffin, and made me write down what should stand as the inscription on the breastplate. The door of Bruno's room, during this proceeding, was carefully shut.

"And now, Master Svensson," said she, as this was all accomplished, "what is to be the price of the coffin?"

Embarrassed and astounded with these proceedings, the joiner bethought himself a while, and then said, "Fifty dollars banco, your honour."

"Are you mad, Master Svensson?" demanded keenly *Ma chère mère*. "Fifty dollars banco! five-and-twenty rix-dollars more than you charged for the coffin of my late husband? Bethink yourself what you are saying. I can show you the bill for the general's coffin, Master Svensson."

"Oak, your honour, is become so dear since then."

"And who, the hangman! told you to make it of oak? For what I care, you may use birch, or alder, or fir, or what wood you will. The wretched body is but dust, I think, whether it lie in a coffin of oak or of deal. 'Let death but strike, we're all alike.' It is true, I am of an old and noble family, and so was also my husband, the late General Mansfeld; but what then, Master Svensson?"

"When Adam delved and Eve span,
Where was then the gentleman?"

And where is he when the body lies in the grave? Take deal, or rather birch, for my coffin, good Master Svensson, and let it be fifty rix-dollars."

"Sixty rix-dollars, your honour."

"Fifty rix-dollars, Master Svensson; I won't give more; and you may regulate yourself accordingly. Fifty rix-dollars, money of the realm, I say. Not a shilling more; but I invite you to the funeral feast, which my people will hold. Remember, Franziska, that Master Svensson is to be there, or—I will remember it myself, when I give the orders for my funeral. Good-by, my good Master Svensson. The agreement stands. Thanks for your trouble, Master Svensson. Good-by."

So much as I have seen of *Ma chère mère's* singularities, I must yet confess that this scene amused me not a little. I saw, however, clearly, that no fondness for peculiarity, but an inveterate pro-

pensity to manage and rule everything, led her to bespeak her own coffin, and settle its character and price. *Ma chère mère* seemed to find the whole business perfectly natural; and said to me, as soon as the joiner was gone, "These work-people are always greedy animals; one must make the closest bargains with them; but their ~~fox~~ shall not bite my goose." On this she proceeded to give the orders for her funeral. She dictated, and I wrote, how the whole should be arranged; how many pounds of confections should be purchased, and so on. She ordered a messenger to be sent to the pastor of her parish, to request him to come the next day to Ramm. "I will," she said, "die as becomes a Christian." All these things being settled, she expressed much satisfaction, and asked me to give her somewhat to drink. "The old beverage," said she, "I am grown quite tired of. I would fain have something different, but I know not what."

A lucky thought occurred to me, and I hastened to say, "I have a receipt for a kind of lemonade; properly a kind of toast and water; in a word, a very refreshing and excellent drink. Let me make *Ma chère mère* some of that."

"Do it, Franziska. Thou art not without resources. Something always occurs to thee, and that is a fortunate nature. Better to be without comfort than without resources."

I hastened immediately to Bear, and imparted to him my proposition. He was quite delighted with my inventiveness, and began immediately to brew his composing-draught and my toast and water, since both of them were one and the same thing.

Bruno, in the mean time, is in a restless and gloomy mood, and is not free from the delirium of fever. He loves his mother really extremely, and cannot reconcile himself to the idea of her dying. Bear endeavoured to pacify him with kind words and hopes. Hagar is much about him, but this seems to irritate him. He treats her harshly, but she bears all with slavish servility. How deep must a woman have sunk before she can suffer herself to be so treated, and, like a hound, creep fawning to the foot which kicks it away! How unlike to this spirit of a slave is the free, but unassuming mind, with which an honoured and beloved wife devotes herself to the object of her pure devotion! Poor Hagar!

Ma chère mère cannot bear Hagar, and she shrinks from her sharp and penetrating eye. "She is certainly his Dulcinea," said *Ma chère mère*, yesterday, to me. "I shall speak to Bruno upon it. I cannot away with anything of the sort."

The composing-draught is now ready, and I will fetch it. God help me! It seems to me as if I was playing a deceitful part towards *Ma chère mère*, and that is very uncomfortable to me.

Later.

It is done! It succeeded, but it was within a hair of all being lost. As I received the cup with the draught out of Bear's hand, I said, "Bear, thou art, however, quite sure that this will not sleep her to death?"

"Dost thou think I am a quack, Fanny?"

"God forbid! thou art Æsculapius himself; but—but—oh! Bear, it goes hard with me to deceive her."

"Hadst thou rather that she loose her reason, or that she has a stroke? My little Fanny, it won't do to hesitate. Do it quickly, and then it is done the easiest. With the help of God, this draught will save her."

I went to *Ma chère mère* and gave her the cup, while I said, as confidently as possible, "Here, *Ma chère mère*, is my cordial."

"Ah! that is famous!" said she, raised herself, tasted the draught, started, and made a wry face. "What is this for a cursed gallimathias, that thou hast stirred together, Franziska?" she exclaimed; "it tastes actually poisonous." She fixed, at the same time, one of her keenest looks on me. Had I had a poison-cup in my innocent hand, I could not have trembled more or looked more criminal.

"Thou unlucky Bear," thought I, nearly ready to cry, "now I must empty the cup myself to testify my innocence, even if I should sleep till the day of judgment for it."

"God have mercy on thee," continued *Ma chère mère* with the same look, "if thou art in conspiracy with thy husband to deceive me!"

"And if it was so," said I, as I threw my free arm around her neck and kissed her, and wet her cheek with tears, "if it was indeed so, would not you, mother, be so good to your children as to take the draught for their sakes, and believe them that, though it tastes somewhat unpleasant, it will only do you good?"

Ma chère mère looked at me for a moment seriously, but friendly, and then said, "Thou art an artful woman, Franziska, and a good child, and knowest how to manage the old one; and for this quality she loves thee, and will now do as thou wishest, come of it what will. *Skål*, my child!" And with one draught she emptied the cup.

I embraced her, thanked her, and wept in my joy. She patted me kindly on the cheek, and seemed to experience pleasure in seeing herself beloved. I ran in triumph to Bear, and showed him the empty cup.

"Ay, ay," said he; I "thought it would pass, and the draught not taste so bad neither; by my troth, it was not easy to prepare it."

"Thou conceited Bear!" I interrupted him; "cease to boast of thy abominable draught." And I now related to him what had passed; and I must do him the justice to say, that he changed the praises of his drink into glorifications of myself. I cherish a quiet hope that the draught already operates. *Ma chère mère* does not, indeed, sleep, but she is still. It is nine o'clock. I shall to-night watch by her.

Eleven o'clock.

Now she sleeps. God be praised, she sleeps sound and well! It is a pleasure to see her sleeping. Bear has driven every one in the house to bed. No one dare stir; it is as still as the grave. Hu! how came that word into my pen? I erase it. I watch in *Ma chère mère's* chamber with Elsa, whose indefatigable zeal I can but admire. Bear sits within with Bruno, in order to keep him as quiet as possible, while they await the result of the sleep. He has the best hopes. That we may maintain the greatest possible silence, Bear and I have agreed to telegraph the slightest change in *Ma chère mère* by small strips of paper, which I write upon and stick in the keyhole; and, in the mean time, to keep myself awake, I employ myself in drawing Elsa's profile, which, in the etherlike background of the lamp-light, stands dark, sharp as if cut in stone, and immovably turned towards and gazing on the sleeper.

Two o'clock.

Ma chère mère still sleeps; sleeps deep, and perspires profusely. I have telegraphed this to Bear. "Good sign," he has telegraphed back. God be praised! now I hope all is well.

Elsa's portrait is like. The original sits yet on the same spot, and looks immovably in the same direction.

Four o'clock.

Elsa has just come to me and whispered in my ear, with a scarce perceptible voice, "Do you think her life will be saved? Do you think she will wake?"

"Yes; I believe it with certainty."

"If she dies I will die too."

"Why so, dear Elsa?"

"What should I do here on the earth without her? And then—she must have some one in heaven to wait on her, and be at hand day and night."

"She will then be with God's angels, Elsa."

"Yes, dear madame; but they cannot fall so exactly into her humours as I can. They have not lived with her forty years, as I have."

Elsa returned to her post, and took her former position. I saw again the dark profile on the clear background. Elsa's faithful, mountain-fast devotion touched me deeply, and reminded me of Goethe's words: "It is not our merit only, but their truth, which often secures to us the hearts of others."

Six o'clock.

Ma chère mère still sleeps; sleeps sound, and by the instreaming daylight her countenance looks awfully pale. Think only, if she should sleep her last sleep! Bear and I have had a brisk correspondence on this long sleep through the keyhole. Will you have a specimen of it? for with the whole of it I will not burden the post.

STRIP 1. "She sleeps, sleeps, sleeps. I begin to fear that she will wake no more!"

2. "She will wake."

3. "Oracles have heretofore deceived themselves."

4. "But not now."

5. "Wise man, Bear, and prophet, tell,

Know'st thou all things, and so well—

Who is that, in deepest night,

Who calls thee Glory, Crown, and Light?"

6. "No one else, as I opine,

But this little wife of mine."

7. "Wise man, Bear, and prophet, tell,

Know'st thou all things, and so well—

Who is that, in deepest night,

At thy conceit, who laughs outright?"

But enough of this child's play.

Nine o'clock.

Away with coffin, confections, and funeral! *Ma chère mère* has awoke, is quiet, quite sensible, and feels quite well, though extremely faint. Bear guarantees her life. We have embraced right and left in our joy. And Bruno! I must weep, as I saw him clasping Bear's knees. I will love Bruno, for he can love. *Ma chère mère* herself seems somewhat astonished, but quiet and satisfied. I gave her, just now, her tea. As she took the cup out of my hand, she looked at me with a kind and roguish countenance, and gave me a little blow on the cheek. She is again gone to sleep, and I will now also allow myself a little rest.

Eleven o'clock.

All goes on well, extremely well; we shall all be quickly quite right, except that I shall contract a home-sickness for my little Rosenvik. *Ma chère mère* recovers her strength rapidly, and can already stand again; but she will not go hence till Bruno is well enough to accompany her to Carlsfors, and earlier I am not to be allowed to return home. "Patience!" says Bear. A detestable word. It is exactly when I hear it that I become impatient. In the mean time, I send off this letter, embrace thee, and thank God for that which is.

CHAPTER XV.

Ramm, Sept. 16th.

HAS it never happened to you, Maria, that you have regarded a certain person exactly as Robinson Crusoe regarded his island, as a sterile ground; and suddenly, a chance, a little voyage of discovery, has made you, like the said Robinson, aware of a lovely region, rich in the most excellent and delicious productions? Voyages of discovery, in the world which we call "Man," turn out, very likely, as in other regions, often ill enough; and the explorer, not seldom, remains sticking, like Captain Ross, in the ice; but we have they most frequently conducted into a pleasant country. So to-day. Will you follow me in a voyage of such discovery? My island is called Lagmanau Hök.

Behold him planted on a stool, like a fir-tree on its rock, in *Ma chère mère's* room at Ramm. See there, also, sunk in a deep stuffed chair, like a bird on its nest, the lively Miss Hellevi Hausgiebel. See, stately, and only like herself, *Ma chère mère*, leaning back in one corner of her sofa; see Bruno, like a beautiful night, darkening and adorning the other sofa corner. See, farther, two every-day figures sitting faithfully together, like a pair of turtle-doves, or a bear and his bearess. See comfort in the room, and satisfaction on the faces of the people, and hear what, in the twilight of the evening, rolls lightly from the heart, over the tongue, and now reaches thy ear.

Miss Hausgiebel. Uncle Hök! you look, this evening, so thoroughly finished and perfect, that I feel myself quite oppressed by it. It would really do me good if you would but, in this twilight, make confession of some little weakness. For instance, I am persuaded that you have, in some little thing, a slight touch of covetousness. Every man has such a one, I am convinced, if he will but hunt it out.

Ma chère mère. "Sweep first before your own door before you sweep before your neighbour's," says the proverb. Begin with yourself, Cousin Hausgiebel, and confess your sins.

Miss Hausgiebel. I, poor, sinful mortal, confess, from the bottom of my heart, that I have a hankering after pins and waste paper, which approaches to a real avarice.

Lagman Hök (gravely). And I know nothing on earth which are so dear to me as bottles, be they full or empty; and it is with the greatest difficulty that I prevent myself boxing the ears of a servant when he breaks one.

Miss Hausgiebel. Ha! glorious! glorious! my dear, excellent uncle. Hear, you good people there, do neither better nor worse than us. Your avarice, good doctor?

Bear (laconic). Paper.

Miss Hausgiebel. Good! therefore the fewer prescriptions. But we cannot live without them. Madame Werner, yours?

Franziska. Needles and thread.

Miss Hausgiebel. You, Madame Mansfeld, won't you throw your contribution into our little collection?

Ma chère mère. Why not? But I am afraid it would be quite too much, if I threw all my covetousness into the scale. So content yourselves with what I do not otherwise willingly give away—with ends of riband and old linen. But remember, my friends, "He who does not waste a penny, gets two;" "He who wins more than he wastes, soon has a dining-room;" "He who gathers, has."

There was a short pause. The turn came to Bruno to confess his innocent failings; but, whether he had none such, and that soundly abominable, or whether he had paid no attention to our gossip, he showed no disposition to shrive himself, and none of us felt a desire to require it of him. He sat with downcast eyes, sunk into himself, and supported his bound-up head on his hand. Lagman Hök broke the embarrassing silence, and replied to *Ma chère mère's* words: "Madame Mansfeld is quite right: we must, every one in his own way, be a gatherer."

Miss Hausgiebel. Take care, uncle, that you do not make out that our sins are virtues. You know it is written, that we must lay up our treasures there where no thief breaks in and steals.

Lagman Hök. Much there, but a little also here. One agrees very well with the other, if one looks well at the thing.

Ma chère mère. I am just of that opinion.

Franziska. What is the whole human race but a great procession of seekers and gatherers! But, alas! how many there are who find nothing, or preserve nothing!

Lagman Hök. And that, especially, because they have not sought and found themselves. At the bottom, every man seeks, chiefly, harmony with himself. But you must understand what I mean.

Franziska. Give us an example, Lagman Hök—a living one, if possible, then we may come to a clear conception without much beating about.

Miss Hausgiebel. You, for instance, worthy uncle, have, to a certainty, found yourself; for never did I see a person so quiet, so secure, and, I may also say, so wise and good. Tell us how you sought and how you found yourself.

Franziska. Oh yes! tell us that, good Lagman.

Lagman Hök. Do you know what you ask of me, ladies? Nothing less than the grand event of the history of my life.

Miss Hausgiebel and Franziska. Oh yes, yes! relate us the history of your life.

Lagman Hök. It is impossible to refuse the request of two such amiable ladies, therefore I will begin at once with the most difficult confession; for you are probably not aware that he who now addresses you is—an unsuccessful author! It is well that it is now so dark. Well, after the first hard step is made, the rest will be easier.

"My father was a meritorious writer, and educated me to tread in the same path. My endowments seemed to foster his wishes. I early wrote poems, dramatic pieces for name-days and birth-days; and received sweetmeats and praise, and already saw, afar off, the laurel crown. I was brought up surrounded by the works of poets. I read them through and through till I knew them by rote, and took their thoughts for my own. My parents were ambitious, and my domineering desire of distinction was by them yet more stimulated. Some of my poetical attempts met with approbation from the public, and praise in the newspapers; and through this intoxicated, as well as by the encouragement of my parents and the encomiums of my young friends, among whom was most prominent one young and sanguine man, named Lerche, I resolved, like Byron, with one spring to plant myself on the summit of the Parnassus of the present age. I wrote a tragedy in five acts, and—wait a moment; I must linger a little over this hour of apparent

happiness. Really great poets possess, as I believe, a certain reflective repose, even in the moment of composition. They are given up to their subject, and embody themselves with it in a sacred earnestness. When they contemplate that which they have produced, they are rather disposed to feel dissatisfied than satisfied with their creations. This proceeds from their deep comprehension of the greatness of life. It is exactly because they feel it thus that they are great. Little spirits—writers who are enraptured with themselves and their works—should tremble and call to mind the words of Boileau:

'Le sot à chaque vers soi-même s'admire.'

"I feared nothing as I wrote my tragedy. I was transported, and held my enthusiasm for that of the public. I marched with great strides to and fro in my chamber, declaiming my verses. At effective passages, that is, such as appeared effective to me, I stood still and listened to the acclamations of the public. They elated me. I leaped for joy, and came down again, but not to my senses. The partiality of my parents and friends favoured my intoxication. 'Thou wilt rise high,' said Lerche. I believed it; and between myself and immortal honour saw only a representation.

"It took place. My hopes were wound up to the highest pitch; my tragedy—fell. There was not a single clap of approbation. Silence; some hissing; even laughter. Some days after came the critics, in the public papers, who left not a solitary hair on the head of my Christiern the Second, and sought to rob me of every hope; ay, of ever being able to win the veriest little shrivelled leaf of laurel. I knew well that they had done the same to many a one before, who, nevertheless, had become a great and renowned writer; and I resolved not to suffer myself, by such means, to be frightened from my aim. But in vain did I endeavour to console myself with these thoughts of the stupidity of the critics, and the experience of great writers; my annihilating critic was the whole public; and, what was still worse—myself. That is the last tribunal from which there is no appeal. Yet, in the first moments after the fall of my Christiern, I was far removed from this. Humbled, but more exasperated than humbled—I determined to do battle with the critics, yes, even with the people itself; with the first in a bitter reply, with the second by yet another tragedy. But then stepped forward my never-to-be-sufficiently-honoured friend, the lady of General Mansfeld, here present, and, with her powerful and sound understanding, which already distinguished her in her younger years, held me back.

"My friend," said she, 'better fly than fight ill. It is unnecessary to carry wood into the forest; why cast butter into the fire which burns you? Let the people cry; and see well to it that they are not in the right. I do not profess to be a judge of your piece, and of such things, but I tell you that it does not much please me. It appears to me unnatural. But suppose I am wrong, and the people are wrong; good—then will your piece, probably, one day receive justice. That, I believe, has happened before now both with books and men. But if you find, after sufficient proof, that the people are right, then give up your piece; it will do no good to fight for it; and, if you have written a bad piece—well, you may yet write a better. And if you cannot do that, then you are not fit for an author,

and—what then? Are you on that account a bad man? Do not many other ways stand open to become an able and happy member of society? Dear Høk, only take care that you open your eyes at the right time. It is so well to make the first injury the last, and to receive the bitter teaching with thankfulness.'

"I took the words of my valued friend to heart, went home, and reflected in deep silence on my unsuccessful tragedy. There fell a veil from my eyes. I had not been prudent enough to avoid becoming intoxicated, but I was not so mad as not to become sober again. I saw clearly that my tragedy only resembled those of Schiller in the same degree that apes resemble men; and I threw it into the fire. For the rest, it was not easy for me to take my resolution in this matter. I had prepared myself for the field of literature, yet I discovered more and more my want of the creative power of the poetic faculty. I had no inclination to another employment; I knew not what to undertake—what I should become. I had lost the rudder, and my bark was the sport of the waves. To this was added the disappointment and distress of my parents; the long faces of my friends; and their 'Poor Høk!' Even Lerche sighed, 'Poor Høk!' This was not to be endured. Then came again my excellent young friend, and procured me, from my parents, permission to travel in foreign countries; to drive, as she said, the affair out of my heart.

"I travelled—often on foot, for my means were small—through a great part of Europe; travelled two years; saw life in manifold forms; thought, and compared. My misfortune in the world of fancy had strengthened my understanding, and the suffering which I had experienced inspired me with an urgent desire to comprehend that which, everywhere and in all circumstances of life, with a certain degree of cultivation, gives to existence peace and independence. Among many observations which I made, I will only allude to one, trivial as it may appear, because it became of the highest importance to me in life. The world is rich in the excellent and the beautiful. Truly to comprehend, to value, and to admire the beautiful, is a great medium of ennoblement, of peace, of happiness. Should the proud passion to create, which reigns in so many young and active souls, change itself into a desire for discernment, into a capacity to admire the beautiful and the excellent, then would their restlessness be converted into repose, the world would contain a less amount of presumptuous and dissatisfied men, and feeble productions of art; and the really great talents would find more admirers, and would rise higher. Artists and connoisseurs are necessary to each other, and mutually elevate each other. The best and happiest men I found among those who united with a useful, regulated activity in the middle ranks of life a sublime feeling for the beautiful, and a capacity to enjoy the noblest creations of art.

"After my two years of travel and observation, I returned, sound in soul and body, and began a new career of life. Yet I renounced not literature; on the contrary, the more my situation in life became determined, with a more intimate love did I attach myself to this life-giving fountain. But I had learned to know myself. I strove no longer for the artist's renown, for the crown of laurel and of thorns; but I sought to perfect in me the enlightened lover and judge of art. I desired that, even if I myself could not produce the beautiful, no one should exceed

me in the skill thoroughly to estimate and to enjoy it. And I can say that in this I have not been altogether disappointed. Since I have renounced a vain endeavour, and learned to know my one talent, I have become peaceful and happy. I am now old, and every year removes me farther from the world; but not from the eternal beauty which thus inexhaustibly renews itself in ever-varying forms. I hang with firm love thereon; it endows my heart with new youth; it prevents my thoughts growing gray with my hair; and inspires me with a hope that hereafter, in the true native land of beauty, I shall become one of its not unworthy worshippers."

So spoke the old man, and from his mild blue eyes glanced a lively satisfaction. We thanked him heartily, and I exclaimed, somewhat thoughtlessly, "Oh! I wish that all men, as well those who have found as those who have not found, before they depart from this theatre of action, would make their confessions. I am certain that no book would be pleasanter, or more beneficial, than a collection of such autobiographies. They would become good guides for the inquiries in life. But, Miss Hausgiebel! will you not at once throw in your contribution? I will undertake to sketch it out. You certainly are one of those who have sought and have already found."

"I cannot say wholly no to that," answered Miss Hausgiebel; "although much yet remains to be done before I have obtained full satisfaction with myself. Yet I have already found far more in the world than I dreamed of in my youth; and if you, worthy friend, will hear a tedious history, I will willingly relate it to you."

"I have passed through no great misfortunes; have to complain of no great disappointments. I have gone quietly enough through my world; I have suffered *ennui*, merciless *ennui*, and therefore can truly say that I have borne the heaviest burden in the world. My father was a man of honour, upright and true. All the Hausgiebels in a direct descending line have been of this character: loving the right, even to inflexibility; straightforward in bodily bearing and in principles; swerving neither to the right hand nor to the left; and I know not how it has happened that I have become so unworthy a descendant from my honour-meriting ancestors. My father, as I observed, had an admirable moral character, and, therefore, is he now happy in heaven; but he had extremely strict and old-fashioned notions regarding the education of women. He believed, for instance, that it was good for young maidens to suffer *tedium*, or, as it was called, to be bridled. He was a sworn foe of all those things which he called vanity, in the catalogue of which stood many an innocent pleasure. He abhorred, also, pedantic learnedness in women; but in this rubric was a multitude of useful and happiness-conferring varieties of knowledge laid under the ban. Above all things, he prized household virtues, but those, again, were confined to a narrow circle. We must weave, spin, sew, attend to the kitchen and domestic affairs; study *Kaisa Warg*,* and any other book he saw with great displeasure in the house; and, by such means, prepare ourselves to become able wives and mistresses of families. He himself maintained a strict oversight over me and my five sisters. My sisters wove, I spun; each one, in turn, had to attend to the kitchen for a week. Well, the day went over; agreeable it was not. I, especially,

found it often insupportably long, particularly as I advanced in years. My spinning appeared to me wholly useless, as I knew that we possessed property.

"Years flew by. With the exception of some old relations, strangers were never seen in our house. The sisters wove, and I spun—I combed it, with ever-wearier hand. The emptiness of my soul and of my life oppressed me; I had often vapours and tears, I knew not why. The good aunt Anna Stina, who supplied the place of mother to us, was a genuine Hausgiebel, and obeyed in all things the will of her brother; but, for the rest, was very kind to us. She had constantly on her tongue, 'Advice to my Daughter,' and often preached to us in the words,

"Our household—that is our republic;
Our politics, the toilet,' &c.

"We lived on a remote estate in the country. Life in the country may be one of the richest on earth, but it may also be one of the poorest. If the great book of Nature be opened to the eye of him who resides there, and illumined with the light of heaven, from his little knoll he can see and enjoy all the glory of the world; but if he sees in Nature only the potato-field which gives him food, then is this golden vein closed for him, and he himself stands, like the potato-plant, fast rooted in the earth. Our family was much in this condition. I must, however, except myself. The order of Nature early attracted my admiration, its particular objects awoke my desire of possession. I was early, though secretly, a collector of plants, stones, and shells. We must often accompany my father on the long rounds which he took in order to see how his corn prospered. It must have been very edifying to have seen how we went along in a row, like a flock of snipes, sometimes in the heat of the sun, sometimes in the wet. I, in the mean time, was very often left behind, lost in the observation of some plant, or of some small insect. On account of this, as well as of my reveries, I was afterward often rallied, in a manner which, though it was very gentle, yet wounded my sensitive feeling of honour deeply. My father often amused himself with throwing off little family pictures, such as our house was to present in the future. For instance, he would say, 'Anna Maria winds, Lotte weaves, Lizzy goes and gives out sugar and spice for dinner, Josepha spins, Grete feeds the fowls;' and at the end of the family picture always came, 'and Hellevi sits and gazes at the sun,' or some such unprofitable proceeding, which conclusion always took such an effect on me that I burst into tears. To be the only useless member of the family! no, that was far too insupportable, far too humbling. When now came my week of housekeeping, I jingled my keys actively, to let my father hear how zealously I discharged the duties of my office. Ah! it was all to no purpose! In the next family-sketch it was still the same; 'and Hellevi sits and gazes at the sun.' In my family it was the fixed and perpetual adage, 'Hellevi will never make a good housekeeper—and then what is she fit for?' In this belief died my father and my aunt; in this belief yet live my sisters.

"I have stated how we spent the days, I must now say a word on the evenings. At seven o'clock my father assembled us every evening in his room. We sat there, employed on our sewing and embroidery, and that round a great cir-

* *Kaisa Warg*, authoress of a cookery-book much used in Sweden.

* "Advice to my Daughter," a poem of the celebrated Swedish poetess, Anna Lenngren.

cular table with two candles, about which there generally fell out some contention. My father sat at some distance from us, at a little table, with an eye-shade before him, and read aloud to us. This should have been a great pleasure to us; but, in the first place, the French history, on which we were I know not how long engaged, was of a very old edition; and in the next, my father's mode of reading was extremely slow and monotonous. When now, in autumn and winter evenings, the rain and snow beat against the windows, and the storm without howled its mournful song to the heavy, long-drawn-out words within, no one need wonder that the spirit of sleep became mighty in us, that we nodded to one another, as in rivalry, over our embroidery. When one of us resigned ourselves to the overpowering influence of Morpheus, then winked and blinked aunt Anna Stina waggishly across to the rest, as much as to say, 'There! the sister's gone!'

"At nine o'clock all were aroused, as well the waking as the sleeping, by my father pushing back his chair; and we drew, one after another—the precedence of age being in the Hausgiebel family ever held sacred—into the eating-room to supper. This was moderate, and did not last more than ten minutes. Hence we returned again to my father's room, where we must continue till the clock struck ten. During this time we were not to work, but exclusively to devote ourselves to conversation. Every one of us had her appointed place in the room. Mine was by the stove, where the warmth made me some recompense for the frost which reigned in the discourse; for all circumstances which might have lent a living interest to it were strongly interdicted; and when I, at times, dared to step on the forbidden ground, I was speedily warned off it again, with the remark, that women had nothing to do with such subjects. Our conversation might touch upon nothing but the little occurrences of the day, especially those within the house; of acquaintance, genealogies, and matters of business. This made, according to my taste, a meager entertainment, and gladly would I have stayed away; but we were neither allowed to do that, nor to be silent during the conversation-hour, but every one must say something. When any one of us had not opened her mouth for some time, she was called upon, in a friendly voice, to say something. In order to vary a little our entertainment, my father sometimes took out an old casket, in which lay a number of curiosities, which had, probably for the twentieth time, been laid out, one after another, turned about, and contemplated. It was a misfortune that my father never would cease to regard us as little children; but the little clasps and rings, the profiles of grandfather and grandmother, the little box with the feathers of the canary-bird in it, which delighted the maiden of nine years old, the magic lantern, which had excited her whole curiosity, could not possibly interest the woman of five-and-twenty, now compelled to stand by, and regard the contents of the casket with a weary and indifferent gaze.

"I observed, that in the conversation-hour after supper, we must always say something, though we were not allowed to say what we would. Hence often arose the most ridiculous little miseries. One example may give a conception of these. My sisters and myself had one day seen how a little herd of vagabond suckling pigs had come swarming into the courtyard, and

how they were chased round by the three yard-dogs. This precious event of real life was hoarded up in our faithful memories the whole day through, in order to season the evening's conversation. By chance, we came this evening into my father's room, not in a connected line, but with sundry breaks and pauses. Anna Maria, who took her place first, told the story of the little pigs and the dogs; the same did Lotte, who came after her; the same Josepha, who came after her; the same, also, Grete, who came after her. As I, at length, came and took my place by the stove, and began to relate the story of the swine, my father interrupted me, somewhat tartly, and said, 'Yes! this story I now hear for the sixth time.'

"I confess that this made a strong impression on me, and more than ever showed me the narrowness of our potato-plantation sort of existence. When my father, two years afterward, died, and my good aunt found it quite natural that we should continue to live in the same way, without prospect of change, then gazed Hellevi actually up at the sun, and said, 'No, thou beautiful, all-quickenning sun, the world which thou illuminest cannot be so narrow; the life which thou awakest cannot be so poor. The wells of life and of virtue gush not up merely in the kitchen and the cellar; no! out to thee, out into the free air, into the beauty of the divine world!' I knew already what I would; I knew my talent and my place; and everlasting thanks be to the worthy man, to the good and wise guardian, who extended his hand, and, spite of the opposition, which my independent proceeding had raised in the Hausgiebel family, enabled me to achieve my object. I was seven-and-twenty years of age, gave myself out as thirty, took the Bird's Nest on lease, and so arranged my affairs that in a few years I could purchase it. How I have settled myself there, you, my friends, know. For these ten years have I there, every day, lifted my eyes to the sun, even when it has been veiled in clouds, and praised it, and the magnificent world; and for this receive my thanks, my guardian, and excellent uncle!"

A tear peared itself in the living eye of Miss Hellevi as she extended her hand to Lagman Hök, who affectionately pressed and kissed it.

"And *summa et finis* of all this," said *Ma chère mère*, "is, that there is nothing so bad out of which good may not arise, if we do but receive it in the right way."

Franziska. Yes; but why do so few hit the right way? All would willingly do it.

Lagman Hök. Over the causes of this one might read a long litany. Above all, men may ascribe this failure to themselves, to their own want of courage, to their want of bravery, in the sense in which the ancients used the word. We suspect not what power and elasticity the Creator has implanted in human nature. We have not the courage boldly to resign, nor the courage to break resolutely forth. We will not capitulate, we will not sally, till the garrison perishes of hunger, or the enemy Death comes and takes the whole by storm."

"Devilishly well said," muttered Bear.

Here Bruno raised himself, silent, and lost in thought. All stood up, and the strangers prepared for their departure. Miss Hellevi stood at a window. I went to her, and expressed my admiration of Lagman Hök: "That is really a most admirable and interesting man!"

"What would you say, then," replied the live-

ty Miss Hausgiebel, "if you knew him as I know him? if you knew his active labours for the good of men; how he works in silence to serve talented, but poor artists, and brings their productions to the light? He is certainly one of the noblest and best of men."

"He can make a will for one of my ten daughters," thought I. It was long since I had thought of my ten daughters, but, after the conversation of this evening, I thought much of them.

18th.

God be praised! I have a prospect of getting home. They talk of to-morrow and the next day. I yearn with my whole heart after my little Rosenvik. This mansion is large and noble, but I am not comfortable here. It is too gloomy, and a horrible number of jackdaws clamour everlastingly on the old tower. I am in a melancholy mood, and I fancy I get continually more and more like an old family-portrait which hangs in my room. Bruno and *Ma chère mère* are much together. They say little, but appear to be happy when they see one another and sit in the same room. Bruno seems to have listened to *Ma chère mère's* scruples regarding Hagar; and, since Bruno is better, Hagar is little to be seen. Bruno wins my heart wholly, by his great tenderness towards his mother.

CHAPTER XVI.

Rosenvik, September 20th, 18—.

I CAME hither last evening. I cannot tell you how happy I am to be here again; how delighted I am with my rooms, my cotton furniture; with what pleasure, this morning, I greeted the hole in the window-curtain, and saw the day stream in through it. I drink in the air of my home in long, deep breaths; for the atmosphere of a beloved home has a peculiar, a refreshing and affecting charm. I have darted hither and thither the whole day, like a flame of fire, on the ground-floor and into the cellar, into the barn and garden; I have scolded and praised. With Sissä, and all that she has had under her hands, I am extremely contented; but the housemaid is disorderly, and she must hear of it. Audumbia has got a calf, a bold little fellow, which, as is proper, I have named *Bör*.

I have greeted my flowers, and stood in wonder to see them so fresh, and so carefully tended. It touched me deeply to find that Serena had been here, regularly, twice in the week, to look after them. Dear, amiable Serena! I loved my flowers; I kissed them, they were so beautiful. I have cut cauliflowers for supper. In the day it had rained a little, and all in the garden stood fresh and full of fragrance, although the frost had touched here and there a leaf with yellow. It is now evening, and I sit down to my writing-table. I have seen the swans furrow the surface of the quiet lake, as they drew towards their nest on Svanö. I have gazed on the gray walls of Ramm, within which I have lately passed through so much. I am happy and thankful. I await the return of my Bear from the city, where he has been the whole day, and have prepared for him my little feast. A duck from the Helga shall display itself large as life on our little table, and in its train shall the cauliflowers and the freshest salad find themselves. Pancakes, with raspberry jam, will follow them with an agreeable grace. As the evening is cold, I have caused the sitting-room to be warmed, and Bear's well-lined dress-

ing-gown and slippers to be displayed before the fire in due state. I will spoil him; and, while I am yet waiting for the good man, I will describe to you some of the scenes of yesterday.

Lagman Hok came to Ramm in order to accompany *Ma chère mère* to Carlsfors. We took our breakfast *en famille*, during which the carriages drove up. The weather was beautiful, and we were all in high spirits. Hagar assisted with the packing, but concealed herself behind the people as *Ma chère mère*, with a lofty and proud bearing, appeared upon the steps. Bruno conducted his mother to her carriage. She had not entered it, before the horses shied at the sight of a wagon, which, covered with a black cloth, drove slowly into the court. Bruno shouted vehemently for it to stop. The wagon halted, and the driver came forward to *Ma chère mère*. It was Master Svensson, and the wagon had brought the coffin which *Ma chère mère* had ordered, and which, singularly enough, every one, till this moment, had forgotten to countermand.

This extraordinary encounter threw us into the utmost confusion. *Ma chère mère* was the first to recover presence of mind, and, with a loud voice, she said to the joiner, "Good master, I have this time, as you see, reckoned without the host. I thought to die, but it pleased the Lord to let me live; praised be his will! But delayed is not defrayed. The coffin will serve me another time. At all events, I abide by the agreement for the price; and as to the feast, why, Master Svensson, I invite you to a feast of congratulation at Carlsfors, on Sunday. And now you can carry the coffin carefully thither; I am on the way there myself."

Master Svensson was in great perplexity. His horse was tired, and, besides that, he had still business in another direction. "Well, well," said *Ma chère mère*, "let the coffin, for the present, remain here where it is. I will send for it one of these days."

Bruno called Hagar, said something to her; and at his beck came some people, who lifted the coffin from the wagon, and, under the wagoner's guidance, bore it into the house. "Mark my words," said Hagar, as she went past me, "disaster will soon come into this house. This coffin will not be borne empty out of it."

I would willingly have addressed some kind expression to Hagar at parting, for she was unhappy, and had shewn herself friendly towards me, but this scene and Hagar's words confounded me; and, by the time I had again collected my thoughts, she was gone, and *Ma chère mère* called to me impatiently to come.

Lagman Hok drove on first in his *doublet-ante*, in order to clear the way. Then came *Ma chère mère*, with Bruno, in her great family-carriage, into which she had taken Elsa; and Bear and I closed the train, in the cabriolet. We arrived happily. It was beautiful to see Jean Jacques and Jane Maria standing in full dress in the gate, which they had adorned with festival garlands, for the reception of the expected ones. It was beautiful to see how the servants, and the multitude of tenants and dependants, crowded round *Ma chère mère*, as she descended from the carriage. Deep emotion and joy appeared in herself, to soften down her customary pride of bearing, as, supported on the arm of her son, and accompanied by a multitude of people, uttering blessings and prayers for her happiness, she slowly ascended the steps before the house. When she arrived at the top, she stood, turned

round, and made a sign as if she desired silence. After she had hemmed several times, as if she would clear her voice, she made the following harangue:

"My dear friends, servants, and people! It is with great joy that I see you here once more assembled round me, since I wish to announce to you that it has pleased the Almighty to restore to me my son, Bruno Mansfeld, who has been long absent, but is now returned, and whom you see standing at my right hand. He it is who lately saved my life at the peril of his own; yes, at the peril of his own; as it pleased God to terrify my horses with his lightning, by which my life was in danger, but, through this my son, was saved; though, in effecting this, he was so much injured by the horses that he still wears a bandage on his head, as you see, my friends.

"My friends, servants, and people! I announce to you that I have already recognised and owned this man to be my only son, Bruno Mansfeld; and I desire and demand from you, my friends and servants, that you conduct yourselves accordingly, and treat him, in all respects, as my rightful son and heir; and that you testify to him all reverence and obedience which you have hitherto testified to me; and I equally hope and believe that my son will prove himself worthy thereof, and will show himself to be an upright and good lord to you. And now, I pray you, my dear friends, that you join with me in imploring the blessing of the Lord on his head."

A hearty "Long live Bruno Mansfeld!" burst forth at the conclusion of this speech, and the multitude rushed up the steps, and pressed round *Ma chère mère* and Bruno, to shake hands with them. But *Ma chère mère* wisely cut short this much too exhausting scene. "Thanks! thanks! my dear friends! but you must now excuse it, that my son cannot longer linger among you, since he is yet so weak from his wounds that he requires rest. But on Sunday we will have a longer chat with one another. I invite you all together to come to Carlsfors on Sunday, as my guests, and to rejoice with me. Beer and wine shall flow; and every one who sympathizes in my joy, and will drink a *skål* to my son, will be heartily welcome. Adieu! adieu! my children!" And with this, *Ma chère mère* took Bruno's arm, and entered the house.

Bruno was, in reality, faint, and strongly affected, and *Ma chère mère* was inexpressibly amiable in her tenderness and care for him. She seemed to have received her youth again, as she herself put Bruno's chamber in order, and made his bed herself. She was therewith as happy as a joyful young mother.

Bruno spent several hours alone in his own room. When he returned to us again, he was very pale; but, under the influence of his mother's gladness, he became every moment more cheerful and handsome; and this worked wonderfully on us all. *Ma chère mère* had entreated Bear and myself most warmly to spend the evening with them; but I could not be truly happy till we rolled on our way, beneath the beams of the moon, towards our beloved Rosenvik. When I, at length, found myself in my own room at home, I leaped for very joy, and embraced and kissed my little Sissa, who returned my embrace with heart and soul. Bear stood and laughed. This morning, the good man betook himself to Carlsfors before he proceeded to the city, and sent me thence these lines:

"Few words are better than none, and I am
N

desirous that my Fanny should rejoice with me that all stands well here. Bruno is far better to-day. *Ma chère mère* has not been so full of the freshness and enjoyment of life for many years. I am to rejoice—rejoice over the reconciled, over the sunshine, over my wife; and am, in time and eternity, thine,
BEAR.

"P.S. Don't go out to-day, dear Fanny. *Ma chère mère* said that she should fetch thee; but don't let her fetch thee. I would willingly spend another quiet evening with thee at Rosenvik."

Go out! no, no, my own Bear; not if the king himself come for me. Hist! I hear a carriage. It is my king—my Bear!

22d.

Do you remember, dear Maria, a little song which begins thus?

"Trust not in life, love;
Trust not in gladness."

That would I sing to-day, if I had the slightest desire to sing at all; but I have not. I threw down my pen last evening with such joy, and flew to meet my Bear; but, the moment I saw him, I stood still and dumb. He was pale, and looked excited, though he reached me, as cordially as ever, his hand. I exclaimed, "What ails thee, Bear? Art thou ill? Has anything sorrowful happened? Ah, tell me what it is!"

"I will tell thee presently."

That presently came soon; for Bear saw my uneasiness, and, as soon as we were in the room alone, he seated himself on the sofa, drew me to him, put his arm round me, and said, quietly and tenderly, "It is, in a word, only a worldly affair, my Fanny; a misfortune which, I am persuaded, thou wilt be able to bear as well as myself, if not, indeed, better. See here. Read it thyself." And he laid in my hand a letter. It was from Peter, written in evident haste and agitation of mind. It contained the intelligence that the house of L— and Co., in which Bear, on the advice of Peter, had placed his property, was become bankrupt, and to such a degree as gave no hope that the creditors would receive the smallest part of a dividend. Peter's little savings were gone too. What Bear, with the labours of twenty years, had gathered together, was now, in one moment, lost forever.

"My brother, my dearest brother!" so Peter concluded his letter, "what I have lost is little, and I well deserve to lose it because I was not more circumspect; but thou—thou art unfortunate through me, and that fills me with despair. This is the bitterest feeling which in my life I ever experienced. If I were not chained here by the W— lawsuit, I should fly to thee, to throw myself into thy arms, and implore thy pardon." Several lines which followed were most indistinctly written. A spot on the paper, evidently caused by a tear, made the last word illegible. On this spot Bear riveted his eyes. "My poor Peter!" said he; and now rolled forth great tears over his pale cheeks. He leaned his head against my bosom, and wept for a moment bitterly. I said nothing, but kissed his forehead, and let him feel that I understood him, and felt with him. He became more composed, and we soon began quite calmly to talk over this untoward occurrence, and our own situation.

"I am now," said Bear, "on the same point on which I found myself twenty years ago. The prospect of a care-free old age is gone. I would not care for myself, were I but alone."

"Bear!" I exclaimed, "wouldst thou be without me?"

"Not for the whole world," answered he: "but I wished that thou shouldst partake my prosperity."

"Joy and trouble, Bear! Vowed we not in the marriage hour to partake together joy and trouble? Ah! comprehend it then, man, that it is my pleasure to share thy trouble when it comes, and that there is no real trouble for me so long as thou lovest me as I love."

I must sketch no more of this conversation. Thou, Maria, wilt easily represent to thyself its continuance. Ah! it is, indeed, so natural, so easy, and so sweet for a wife to let love and comfort stream forth on such occasions. Shame on them who could make a merit of it! enjoyment is its name. Such moments have their own great reward. People never love each other so intensely as then. Bear seemed, indeed, to feel it; he understood my devotion—understood that, at his side, neither courage nor joy could fail me. He was more affectionate to me than usual, he seemed grateful for my tenderness; but his brow did not clear itself; it was furrowed with a brooding anxiety; and, with his hands behind him, he paced the apartments to and fro. "Poor Peter!" sighed he, at last, "I can understand what he suffers, and he cannot come. I wish I was able—"

"To go to him," I suddenly added, guessing what it was which so oppressed him. "But how canst thou be absent from thy patients?"

"I have not many just now, and none which are seriously ill. Dr. D. would attend them in my absence. Then I could very well leave; but, in this moment, not—my wife."

"Oh, set off, then, my Bear! the wife is not unreasonable. Set off, give Peter peace, and satisfy thy own heart. The wife will think of thee; will see after house and affairs. Don't trouble thyself on that account; she will not be uneasy or impatient; she will maintain the honour of her husband."

Bear stretched out his arms to embrace me; now first his brow cleared itself. Oh, the good man! The suffering of his brother had oppressed him more than his own loss. So soon as the journey was determined on, he became quiet; and till deep in the night we sat and talked over our affairs, and how we would settle our plans for the future. That the joy of my little feast dissolved itself in smoke, you may well imagine. For the first time since we were married, was Bear unable to eat, and I could not even bear the idea of it. The duck remained untouched, but was secretly devoted by me to Bear's travelling provision-basket. Before we went to sleep, our minds were again as full of peace and content as if no misfortune had fallen on our house; and we closed this day, as we had done so many others, with thanks to the All-good for our happiness.

Yesterday Bear set out; first to the city, where he must spend the greater part of the day. In the evening he would proceed farther, and will remain away probably a fortnight. That is long. Thus left, I sit here and feel that my resolution by no means maintains the height to which it mounted in the first moments of misfortune. But deep it shall not sink; that I have resolved with myself. The change in our circumstances which goes most to my heart is, that we must leave our little Rosenvik, and set ourselves down fixed and forever in the city. Our means will not allow us any longer to have a country residence for the mere enjoyment's sake. In the depth of my own

mind, I propose again to teach music. Oh, fy upon the tear which here has fallen upon the paper! there shall not be a second. I know, indeed, that all will succeed, and succeed well, when one has courage in the soul, and peace in the heart and house. How miserable it would be of me to be in anxiety about the future, possessing, as I do, one of the best chances of life, my good and estimable husband!

Bear desired that our misfortune, for the present, should remain unknown in the neighbourhood. I will take care, therefore, to give nobody a suspicion of it. I will keep the promise I have given him, will be calm, and seek diversion in work. I have much to do in the garden. I will plant my rosebushes; and, if it be not allowed me to smell these roses, well, then, they will at least rejoice the noses of others.

23d, evening.

I am quite refreshed by my garden labour. Serena has spent the whole day with me, and afforded me great assistance. We have made a strawberry bed, planted gooseberries and roses. I hope they will prosper; and how refreshing is such employment! But what has done me more good than the rest is, that Serena has opened to me all her heart—that good, loving, and pure heart. All is as I had suspected. Serena loves Bruno—Bruno, Serena. For the present, however, the connexion seems to be broken off; but that it will continue so, that I do not believe. And yet, shall I desire a union between them? Ah, I know not! To-day Serena is pale; one sees that she has suffered much. She is now getting ready our tea, and stands by the table, graceful as an angel, but sunk in thought, and with a sorrowful expression about the mouth. I have related to her the whole of that which I lately witnessed and passed through at Ramn; and, as I proceeded, I saw her become pale, redder, weep, suffer keenly, and then rise, as it were, into a radiant trance of rapture. She calls "Tea is ready." "I come, dear creature." Good-evening, dear Maria. I reckon to-night on a good sound sleep. To-morrow I shall spend with *Ma chère mère*. Every day I go on writing a letter to Bear. It will be a mighty packet of important nothings.

Later.

I have had a fright, and I am yet full of the terror of it! As Serena set out homeward, I accompanied her through the yard. The air had, for the lateness of the season, an unwonted mildness; and nature, in her autumnal, half sorrowful beauty, lay peacefully around us, flushed with the clear evening-rose. Serena, sensibly alive to the enjoyment of the hour, said, while we walked a few paces towards the garden, "Dost thou not believe, Fanny, that sometimes there lives in the air what one may pronounce goodness, and which immediately operates beneficially on the heart, from which we become ourselves good?"

"Serena," I said, "thou expressest my own very feeling; but I must, at the same time, ask thee, whether thou hast not discovered, in raw autumn weather, a proneness to become also harsh in mind?"

"Oh yes!" replied Serena; "but we must then seek for the vernal atmosphere of a higher region."

"But this is not always so easy; and, perhaps, for those who do not love, is impossible."

"Yes," said she, "happy are they who have something to love on earth or in heaven. But who," added she, while her look became more earnest, and, as it were, inspired, "who needs be

wholly destitute of this? Is not the world full of objects worthy of our love? Does it not rest with ourselves alone to open our souls to these? And now, Fanny," and she looked round on the beautiful landscape, "are we not, even now, surrounded by living and love-worthy natures? Ah! it seems often to me that voices proceed from trees and flowers, from stars and animals, which speak to me of the great and good Creator, and of the life which they have received from him. Everywhere a spirit meets me which is like my own; which I can understand, and love; and where, in what circumstance of life, breathe not such voices from the things and beings which surround us? There is only demanded of us an open ear."

"And a pure heart," rejoined I, embracing her. "Yes, then would the whole of human life become one continued course of conversation with God, and we should have neither bitterness nor *ennui*. But—"

"But I lose all recollection," said Serena, "while I talk with you. The carriage has long waited: I must go; adieu, dearest Fanny, adieu!"

Serena departed; and scarcely was she out of sight, when my gaze was suddenly struck with a pair of eyes whose expression was unlike that of Serena's. They glanced, like two coals of fire, out of the hedge of elder in which their owner appeared to be purposely concealed. I started, thought of Lucifer, and stared at the two burning gulfs. They were now fixed on me, and Hagar darted forth from the hedge. With a countenance which gave to the wild feeling a terrible expression, she stood before me, and, in a vehement tone, demanded, "Is it she, is it she, that he loves? Tell me, is it she?" I was about to answer her calmly, when, in the same moment, some one approached. Hagar stamped furiously with her foot, wrung passionately her hands, while she muttered between her teeth, "Wo! wo! to her and to me!" and was gone.

Horror-stricken and confounded, I entered the house, saying to myself, "There is a difference between love and love; there is a difference between whom, and how, and what—"

This scene has startled and quite unhinged me. Would to God that Bear was but at home!

CHAPTER XVII.

Rosenvik, September 28th.

THERE is something strange about *Ma chère mère* since the day that she returned to Carlsfors. She is no longer like herself; she is singularly still, and, as it were, sunk in a dream. Her steps and her voice resound no longer through the spacious halls of Carlsfors. One hears no house-thunder, no words of reproof, any longer; but, at the same time, no proverbs, no fresh domestic joke and sport, either. From that day she seems no longer to take interest in what is going forward. Inspector and book-keeper come to consult her on the concerns of the estate, and she refers them to Jean Jacques. The maids come to speak of their affairs, and she refers them to Tuttin. Tuttin comes to deliver her accounts, and to receive orders, and stays long, and lays many matters before her, but receives no answer. *Ma chère mère* appears, at last, to forget that she is in the room, and Tuttin, after she has coughed and wondered, has asked and waited, withdraws with a troubled mind, and still secretly charmed at the prospect of becoming the sole ruling and

ordering power in the house, but presently stumbles on Jane Maria, who takes her by degrees under her sway. Even towards Bruno is *Ma chère mère* changed; and when he is within, she sits silent and looks at him fixedly. Yesterday, as she sat thus, with her eyes directed towards him, I saw two large tears roll down her cheeks. They were the first which I have seen her shed since she has found her son again. What can be working in her mind? What can this brooding and unwonted silence portend? May no attack of hypochondria, or worse, impend! Bruno, even, fears somewhat evil. He took me aside yesterday, and asked, in distress, what was the matter with his mother. I could give him no explanation, and Bear is absent; what shall we do without him? I have written and informed him of the state of things here, so that, if it be possible, he may hasten his return.

October 3d.

I received yesterday a letter from Bear. In his letters he is still more laconic than in his conversation, but there is always a certain raciness about his words. I could draw from his letter, though it did not stand literally expressed there, that his arrival had given new life to Peter, and that his journey in various respects had been advantageous. Of Ebba he says, "She looks like a little bird, that, when the darkness comes, hides its head under its wing. It is well that Peter is now the wing." On the whole, Bear's letter was infinitely kind and satisfactory. He hoped by the sixth of October to be here. May he soon come; his presence is highly necessary. I become continually more uneasy about *Ma chère mère*. Some great change is, to a certainty, in progress in her; and now that I seriously fear for her, I feel more and more how very dear she is to me. For some days she has been yet stiller, yet more sunk in reverie, and seems to possess a certain inward quiet; but in all her movements, in all that she undertakes, prevails an uncertainty, a confusion, a want of tact and aptitude, so unlike her former firm and able manner. She is, moreover, so unwontedly mild and kind, that the servants of the household are astonished and affected by it. They look at one another, and seem to say, "What ails her?" So ask I also.

October 7th.

Ah! Maria, now I know all, and you shall learn all, too. Bear came home the evening before last. I received him as if he had been the only human creature in the world, that is to say, besides myself. What he told me of his journey, of our affairs, of Ebba and Peter, I will relate to you another time; I can now only talk of what occurred yesterday.

It was Sunday, and we went to dine at Carlsfors. Bear's eyes were fixed scrutinizingly on *Ma chère mère*, and his grimaces portended nothing good; that is, they all vanished, which is a sign that his thoughts are serious and sorrowful. At table, *Ma chère mère* had Bear at her right hand and Bruno at her left. She was still and brooding, but also extremely pale. Her bearing was not so proud, her toilet not so orderly as usual. It grieved me to see her. As the soup was removed, she poured out wine for Bruno; it ran in streams on the table-cloth, but she did not observe it. Bruno wished to take the bottle out of her hand, saying, softly, "Dear mother, you pour the wine on the table."

"Do I?" said she, with a melancholy tone; "then I perceive that it is all over with me, my

son. Pour out wine for thyself; thy mother will do it no more!" She set the bottle on the table, pushed her chair from her, and arose. We all arose, too, with one common impulse. "Remain sitting," said *Ma chère mère*, with a strong and imperative voice; "remain sitting; no one may follow me."

She saluted us with her hand, and passed with slow and majestic steps through the wondering servants, but ran against the door, at which both Bear and Bruno sprang forward. She turned quickly, and cried, "Whoever follows me is not my friend. Remain quietly there," she added, in a softer tone: "I will presently have you called."

We knew too well *Ma chère mère's* temperament to attempt to disregard her thus solemnly pronounced will; but you cannot imagine the state of excitement and suspense in which we found ourselves. For more than an hour we continued in this painful expectation. I suffered deeply with Bruno's suffering. With darkly-wrinkled brows he went agitatedly to and fro in the room, and from time to time wiped the perspiration from his forehead. At length came Elsa. The quiet servant was no more like herself. With perplexed look and faltering voice, she requested us to come to Madame Mansfeld. Bruno sprang forward first; we followed him; and, with internal trembling, I expected something horrible. But no; no fearful spectacle met us in *Ma chère mère's* chamber. She sat in the background in her easy-chair, upright and still, but with no general's mien; and only on the pale countenance, on the red and swollen eyelids, appeared the traces of a powerful, but self-conquered agitation of mind.

"Are you all here?" inquired *Ma chère mère*, with a firm voice. We replied in the affirmative, at the same time gathering round her. "My children," began now *Ma chère mère*, with a strange mixture of strength and humility, "I wished to be alone for a moment, in order to prepare myself, as becomes a Christian, to appear before you, and to reveal to you my misfortune. Chagrin has now had its full dominion; it is time that reason should have its. My dear children, the hand of the Lord lies heavy on me; he has smitten my eyes with darkness."

A smothered expression of grief was heard, and its echo spread itself round. I seized Bear's hand, and saw in his countenance that he had already suspected the real matter.

"My dear children," began *Ma chère mère*, again, "you must not distress yourselves about me. I myself grieve no longer. At first, I acknowledge, that it went hard with me; and, for a long time, I would not believe that it could be so with me as it now is. No! I would not concede to it; I resisted the idea of it; I murmured in myself; I was like the old woman against the stream. But it became darker and darker; the calamity became more certain; to-day it became perfectly clear; and now, I have humbled myself. Ah! my children, let us, in the first place, reflect that it is in vain to strive with our Lord God; when we throw little stones at him, he throws back again great ones at us. In the second, that we are shortsighted mortals, and know but little what is best for us and others; and on that account, my children, it is good for us to bow ourselves beneath the hand of our Lord God, and to be obedient to Him, for he knows well what he does."

I could stand quietly no longer. I threw myself, with tears in my eyes, on the neck of *Ma*

chère mère, exclaiming, "Bear will help *Ma chère mère*; he will restore her sight again to her!"

"I hope, really, to be able to do it," said Bear, drawing near, and, as he seized her hand, looked keenly at her. "It is the cataract. It can be cured. In two or three years it will probably be matured, and then an operation can be performed."

"Lars Anders," said *Ma chère mère*, while she pressed his hand, "I believe you, and in this faith I live happily. I will wait patiently till the day comes when I may again behold the Lord's sun; and should it never come for me on earth, I will yet sit, in my darkness, in resignation. I have formerly sat in a deeper darkness; I am now, in comparison, happy. My eyes have been permitted to see the fullness of a great joy; and if I, indeed, cannot see, I can yet hear my son, and, you all," added she, as if fearing to do us an injustice.

Bruno stood leaning over his mother; his head was bowed down to hers: she felt his breath on her forehead. "Is that thee, my son?" asked she, tenderly, and lifted somewhat her darkened eyes.

"Yes, my mother," answered he, in a voice melodious and full of emotion.

"Give me, then, thy arm, my son, and conduct me into the saloon," said *Ma chère mère*. "And you all, my children, follow me. Bruno will play us one of his beautiful pieces, and we will all be as we were before. Co-operate with me in this, my children, and do not let my misfortune trouble you; don't imagine that it is necessary to compassionate me. No one shall have more trouble than formerly to wait on and be helpful to me. I shall soon be able to help myself; and should I need, sometimes, the hand or the eye of another, I will ask for it, and am quite certain that I shall have it. For the rest, we will trouble ourselves as little as possible about this occurrence. 'It is old-wife's comfort,' said our great Gustavus Adolphus, 'to grieve and complain;' and I say it becomes every sensible person to maintain God in his thoughts, and patiently to bear the cross laid upon him."

With this she arose, gave her arm to Bruno; but he put his arm round her, while he pressed, with inexpressible tenderness, her hand to his lips, and so conducted her out of the room. A faint red, on this, flushed *Ma chère mère's* pale cheeks; and with a smile, which one might style that of happiness, she leaned her head against his shoulder. So they went on, and we followed.

Bruno played, as his mother had desired, and played divinely. I have never yet heard any one draw such tones out of an instrument. "He plays, not like an angel, but an archangel," said *Ma chère mère*. But as he descended to gloomier notes, "Dear son!" said she, "play something more lively; that is quite wibegone." Like the celebrated Queen Elizabeth, *Ma chère mère* loves properly only glad some and stormy music.

After the music, arose a general conversation. We drew in a ring round *Ma chère mère*, and every one did his best to amuse and entertain her, and never have I witnessed so spirited and animated a party; even *Ma chère mère* was more lively and elated than I had ever seen her. Bruno shone in interesting and finely-related stories. *Ma chère mère* sometimes screamed quite loud—now from terror, now from astonishment and delight; and I must confess that I did the same. Wonderful, incomprehensible, interesting Bruno! Afternoon and evening flew by in such dis-

course; everybody was amazed when supper was announced; and *Ma chère mère* said, as she arose, "My dear children, you are this evening so excessively merry and interesting, that I could sit up all night and listen to you; but 'he that eats out of the iron pot will have nothing in the dish,' and we must no more riot in pleasures than in other things. I have not been very well to-day, and shall do the wisest to get to bed. I thank you all, my children, for a happy evening, and wish you a blessing on your supper, and a good-night."

Bruno conducted his mother to a chamber, and stayed some time with her. When he returned, he was still sorrowful, but mild: After supper he talked long with Bear respecting the cataract, and inquired, very exactly, concerning the nature and development of it, and the operation upon it; all which the doctor described *con amore*. Bear regards it as probable that it has originated in her violent agitation of mind, on the discovery of her son; but of that Bruno must suspect nothing. It is singular that this mother and this son seem conducted by fortune to occasion mischief to each other; but now, since the blindness has shown itself, the conflict will probably cease, and the angel of reconciliation, which has descended into their souls, spread its wings over their future life. But how will it be in this future with *Ma chère mère*? Will her strength of mind be able to maintain itself? Will her physical strength not sink? What will she do—in what employ herself? She, who has been so commanding, so restless, will she not become oppressed by inactivity? Will she not become splenetic, quarrelsome, peevish, a plague to herself and others? "Tell me, Bear, what thou thinkest about it?" "Hum! we shall see!"

9th.

We are endeavouring to bring our affairs into order; but it is more difficult than we at first imagined. Heavy debts will oppress us; Bear's benevolence towards poor relations on his mother's side now falls with a heavy burden upon him. Many retrenchments must be made in our housekeeping; and yet I can see well that we shall enter the winter with a complete destitution of money. But Bear is strong and kind, and, as soon as we get into the city, I will give music-lessons. We shall remove thither very soon. Bear has taken a little house of three rooms and a kitchen. It grieves me now to leave *Ma chère mère*. Since our last being together, she has not been well. I have the toothache, and my heart is heavy. There come times in which all is so tedious. But we must not forget that we have had enjoyment—that we have been happy. I will not do it; and I will not make my life bitter by too much impatience. Heaviness I hate as cordially as even Miss Hellevi Hausgiebel does; but I now feel that there are difficulties, burdens, of which one cannot get rid; and we must, therefore, take some trouble to bear them lightly.

14th.

Long life to *Ma chère mère*! No one ever can show himself more reasonable under misfortune than she does. No one can with more dignity bow beneath the hand of the Lord. She has transferred the whole of the out-door management to Jean Jacques, of the domestic to Jane Maria, and only reserved the right to be consulted on certain occasions. At the carrying out of this arrangement, she made a great and formal oration to the servants and dependants. Tuttin has given warning to leave the next winter. She

and Jane Maria are not the best friends. *Ma chère mère* has farther written to B—schen Institution, in Stockholm, for a person who shall instruct her how to employ herself with different things, in her blindness; as, for instance, in writing, card-playing, &c. In the mean time, she works diligently at her great net, and plays with great zeal on her violin. In temper she is quiet, kind, and very cheerful. I must also say, that, so far, Jane Maria conducts herself admirably towards her; and in the evenings, with self-denial which is meritorious, plays all the *sonâtes* from Steibelt and Pleyel, "*avec accompagnement de violon*," which *Ma chère mère* can play by rote on her violin. *Ma chère mère* also shows herself more cordial towards Jane Maria, which appears to be felt with a good effect by her. Bruno is every day at Carlssfors. *Ma chère mère* already knows the sound of his horse's feet; her face flushes when she hears it, and she says, "Now he comes!" When he is with her there prevails something more womanly and amiable than usual in her disposition. Bruno has bought Ramm, and settled down there.

15th.

We made to-day various payments, which took all our money. I believed that we had not a single *heller* left, but I discovered that we still possessed a twelve-shilling piece, and I rejoiced so much over it, that I was obliged actually to laugh at myself; then I wept; and after that laughed again, and embraced my Bear. The day after to-morrow we remove into the city. I think, with delight, that I shall then see Serena and the excellent old Dahls. Besides this, we will make no acquaintance at all, but will live quietly, and to ourselves. The winter will soon pass over; but in the spring! ah! in the spring, when all is lovely in the country, when the air, and flowers, butterflies, and the song of birds—no, I will not make myself sad; I really will not. I will have flowers in my room, and I myself will be butterfly, both for myself and for my Bear.

CHAPTER XVIII.

W—, October 20th.

We have been in the city three days. We left Rosenvik on Monday morning, not without tears on my part, I confess it; but I took care not to let Bear see them. Ah! I shall never again call the dearest of little places mine! The morning was gray and raw; snow flew in the air; the road was rough with the night frost. The poor horse drew Bear and his Bearress heavily along. We breakfasted at Bird's Nest, whither Miss Hellevi Hausgiebel had pressing invited us. Her excellent coffee, with the accompanying dainties, her lovely museum, and a cheerful gossip, revived me; and I arrived in the city in good spirits.

Our three rooms are neat and comfortable, but do not lie on the sunny side, which I regret. Farewell, my flowers! Well, we can live without them. I have, during three days, rummaged about greatly. Yesterday I put up curtains myself in our chamber. Serena was here, and helped me. How interesting the conversation over this was, you can imagine. "My angel, give me that piece of muslin." "Have you the scissors?" "Where are the needles?" "Here!" "The hammer?" "There!" "This nail is blunted." "Here is another," and so on. And there was some joke, some laughter. With Serena work becomes pleasure; she does all easily

and well. Towards noon we had all in order; and, when Bear came home, I led him, with some pride, into my room, which he had never before seen so adorned. "Ah! the d—l!" he exclaimed, gaping and grimacing with all his might.

Serena dined with us. She was merry, and joked with Bear. The dinner was good; it was a pleasant little meal. When Serena, after dinner, had left us, Bear fell into a sort of ecstasy over her, and exclaimed, "She is an actual angel!"

"Yes, Bear; and, on that account, she would be not in the least suitable as a wife for thee."

"Not in the least; even as little as I am fit for a husband for her. For me there is only one that is suitable, and that is—my wife."

"Ah! she suits you admirably."

All is now in order in my little house. Had I only a little sun! But, thank God! I have the best sunshine of the house; I have peace!

November 1st.

Our misfortune is now everywhere known. Do you know how we first became aware of this? By Bruno coming one morning to Bear, and putting half of his property at his command. It troubled him that Bear would receive nothing except the loan of a certain sum, and that to liquidate a debt which now pressed upon him. The worthy old Dahl also came to Bear, and offered him his services. All our acquaintances have shown us much kindness and sympathy; many of the families which employ Bear as a physician have immediately sent in their annual payment. By all this our present cares are swept away, and I am charmed with the goodness of men. But no kindness, no visit, has yet affected me so much as that of *Ma chère mère*. She came yesterday afternoon, so friendly and cordial. She caused me to conduct her through the rooms, into the kitchen and store-chamber; made me describe all my arrangements, and lamented only that she could not see my curtains, "which, report said, were so especially tasteful." To the loss we had suffered she made no allusion; but, after tea, she said, suddenly, in a scolding tone, "Listen, Lars Anders: what stupid nonsense is this of which people talk? They say you are intending to leave Rosenvik? That I forbid; and if, for some years, you cannot afford to pay the rent, you shall have it for no rent at all. Ay, fetch me the hangman! that shall you. I shall hear no word against it; it is now said and determined."

Bear, with his horrible independence, resolved to say much against it; but I was so transported with *Ma chère mère's* words, that in an instant I kissed her cheek and hands. This weakened Bear's resistance; so that he merely muttered, "Too much! we cannot accept what we cannot make a return for." But *Ma chère mère* interrupted him warmly, and said, while she held me on her knee, "Good Lars Anders, don't stand there and mutter like a beetle in a tub. Too little, and too much, spoils all. To be independent, and a churl to boot, that's all very well; but to be unwilling to accept a service from a friend is pride, and does no good. You have had a loss; that was no fault of yours. Well, then, you need not be ashamed of it. Take the spoon in the right hand, Lars Anders, and adapt yourself to circumstances. Every one must do that, sooner or later; to-day, I; to-morrow, you; but what is offered from the heart must not be rejected. Besides this, if I

offer you a service, my friend, I offer myself one at the same time; for I like to have you for neighbours; there are none that I like so well. It stands as I have said. Hold Rosenvik for five years, rent free; afterward, you may pay me as you have done before. Better times will soon come for you, my children, for you are diligent and careful; and, after storm and rain, God causes his sun to shine. Don't be headstrong, Lars Anders. Be a kind man. Look at your wife; she is far more sensible than you. Come now, and kiss my hand, and let us be friends." And she extended her hand to Bear, who, half grumbling, and half thankful, and tender, kissed it, and shook it. The affair was settled; was no farther spoken of; and *Ma chère mère* drove away, kind and glad, as she came.

I was so perfectly happy to have my Rosenvik again, and there to enjoy the spring, with its flowers and birds, that Bear could no longer hold out with his stubborn love of independence, but became happy with me. So, then, there shall I again smell my roses, gather my gooseberries, eat my cauliflowers, and cultivate my garden. All that is divine!

November 14th.

For these ten days I have given music-lessons. Serena, to whom I confided my position, has procured me four pupils. They come in the forenoon, while Bear is absent; he knows nothing of it, and will, in time, wonder how it is that the housekeeping goes on so well, and yet how little the money in the box diminishes. It is a pleasure to do this for a man who is so kind, and requires so little; in opposite circumstances it would be a pain. The music-lessons go forward; what, indeed, does not, when one determines it shall? but agreeable they certainly are not. Three of my scholars are very slow in their conceptions, and have been badly taught hitherto. I do all that is possible to inspire them. We thrash through the "*Bataille de Prague*" with labour and pain. The fourth pupil is a clever girl, and gives me pleasure.

With the old Dahls I come continually into a more confidential relation; in Serena I have the best and most amiable of friends; Bear is so kind. Ah! I have much good, for which I ought to be thankful, and yet I am heavy at heart; there hangs a cloud on me, which will not disperse. I am not very well, either; it is so dark here in the city; for several weeks there has been a perpetual fog, converted only now and then into rain; and then, I have certain thoughts, which—

I should like to know what *Ma chère mère* would say to this voice of lamentation; probably, "They who wish to sing always find a song." *Ma chère mère* plays on her violin, and is cheerful in her misfortune. Would that I were but only half as rational as she!

CHAPTER XIX.

W—, November 17th.

WE have now been a month in the city. This fog, this gloomy season, oppresses the spirits; and then the everlasting dirty weather; one cannot get a mouthful of fresh air; everybody has, moreover, colds and affections of the chest; Bear is so busy that I cannot get a sight of him, except at dinner and late in the evening. The old Dahl has got a fit of the gout, and Serena cannot leave him. I do not feel well enough to

go out often, and, therefore, I can see very little of her. I endeavour to employ myself busily at home, but that does not succeed; I have just been trying to enliven myself with the beautiful "Song of the Sun," but I had no voice. Then I thought I would write a little poem, but could find no rhyme to "heart," except "smart," and that put me into a weeping mood; then I set myself to sew away, right or wrong, but the work turned out neither right nor wrong. At last, I placed myself at the window, in order, amid the grinding noise of wagons, and the pattering of the eavesdrops, to relate to you my bad humours. My little pupils also oppress me. We get by no possibility forward with the "*Bataille de Prague*;" we must try something else. Say, do you know anything more wearying than the eternal dropping of the eaves?

19th.

I wished yesterday to see Serena; I needed her friendly countenance, for I was out of humour with many things, and especially with myself. My pupils had, in the forenoon, so tired me, that I wept as soon as I was alone. At dinner the soup was smoked; Bear was obliged to leave me the moment dinner was over; everything appeared insupportable; and, in order to drive away the bad humour, I set off, under the umbrella, and through the mud, to the Dahls's. I found them alone. The little family was assembled in the sick-chamber of the old gentleman. He sat in a great armed-chair, his foot wrapped in flannel. Serena's look and friendliness would have enlivened me, had not her paleness frightened me, and made me suspect that all was not right here. Mr. and Madame Dahl were also unusually still and serious; yet I saw clearly that the relation between the old people and their darling was as entire and cordial as ever.

After tea, Madame Dahl went into her own room, and asked me to accompany her, as Serena would read aloud to her grandpapa, who was not disposed this evening for much talk. When we were alone together, neither would any conversation move on properly between us; the good old lady was sunk in thought, and sighed deeply. I inquired tenderly into the cause, and soon learned it; Bruno, a few days ago, had sought the hand of Serena from her grand-parents.

"His proposal made me sorry," continued Madame Dahl, "as he at once brought forward the matter in so warm and manly a manner; for I have always been much concerned for Bruno; and yet we could not, from many causes, think of Bruno as the husband of Serena, at least not yet, while we know so little of him. There were strange reports about him in his youth, and respecting the occasion of his flight from his mother's house. One has for many years heard nothing of him; and even now he is ambiguously spoken of, especially as regards a certain woman that he has in his house. My husband is strict in his demands of honour and of pure reputation in a man; and, if any one has a right to require these, it is certainly he. He has, as well as myself, a great esteem for Bruno, and rejoices sincerely over the good that he intends and will effect here; but he does not wish to call him son. Serena is the apple of his eye, his pride, his joy; therefore, it is not at all to be wondered at that he will not give her to a man whose life and character are covered with darkness. He, therefore,

received Bruno's proposal coldly; and, without absolutely rejecting it, begged him, at present, to think nothing farther of it; spoke of the future, of nearer acquaintance, and so on; and, in order to bring the not very pleasant conversation to a friendly termination, added, sportively, 'And for the rest, when we read in the Bible that Jacob served seven years, and again seven, for Rachel, we cannot think it unreasonable to wait a few years, to deserve a damsel who certainly is better and handsomer than the young shepherdess in the land of Mesopotamia.' But this joke about Jacob and Rachel did not seem at all to please Bruno. He took his hat, with a dark glance, bowed, and left us without a word.

"When he was gone, we felt it our bounden duty to make all that had passed known to Serena, and to hear what she would say. We did so, and her deep agitation of mind strengthened what I had suspected, and what she herself cordially confessed, in reply to our questions; Serena loves Bruno. Already, as a child, she conceived a fondness for him, and this is now become love. But as my husband laid before Serena the reasons which had induced him to give Bruno an answer so little encouraging, she confessed, even in the midst of her tears, that he had done quite right. And as he added, with emotion, that his gray hairs would go down with sorrow to the grave if she united herself to a man who was unworthy of her, and that even now he could have no peace if Serena were so bound by her affections that she could not feel herself happy unless in marriage with him, she threw her arms round his neck, and begged him to make himself easy; assuring us that she loved us more than she did Bruno, and never would dispose of her hand without our full consent; that she would always remain with us; and said such affectionate things to us; how contented she was with her condition, how happy our tenderness made her, and so on, that our hearts became much lighter.

"Since then, we have said no more of the affair; but God knows how it is, we are all somewhat out of tune. I look at Serena, and see that her heart is heavy, though she shows herself always so kindly towards us. My husband put a restraint on himself in the interview of that day, and the gout has through that become worse. Of Bruno, too, who before was here so frequently, nobody has heard a word; perhaps he has taken the refusal so ill that he will set off again to the West Indies."

"Then let him go," said I; "then he is not worthy of Serena. In truth, I must say, with Mr. Dahl, that she is a maiden who deserves to be served for and waited for; but methinks that seven years, and again seven years, may be a little too much in these days, when men do not live half as long as the patriarchs."

Madame Dahl laughed, and said, "You have always a lively word, my little Franziska. Ah! well, I myself have thought so too, and said so; but my husband, in everything so wise and excellent, is somewhat obstinate in matters of marriage; and, beyond this, it by no means pleases him when any one asks the hand of Serena. Ah, Franziska! I have often thought and suspected that in our tenderness of Serena we probably mingle no little selfishness, and that we, perhaps, are as much afraid of losing, by her marriage, her careful attentions and society, as that she should not be happy in her wedded life. I have had some trouble," added she, with a sigh, "to

make this right clear to myself. Ah! life is a conflict to the grave. The old have probably as great, and even still more powerful temptations to withstand than the young. The blood is so sluggish, the feelings become so numb; the cold which creeps into the body will insinuate itself into the soul. We feel that we need much help, and begin to make demands on others; we have many little conflicts, and, through them, we too easily forget to sympathize in the sufferings and enjoyments of others. In fact, these are happy temptations, and, had we not the Gospel, I feel persuaded that we must sink; and probably we suffer ourselves to become more fettered than we are aware of."

During our conversation, the clock had struck nine. Madame Dahl and I ate a light supper; Serena remained with her grandfather. After supper, we went to him, also, in order to attend the evening prayers, which, for fifty years, have been held every evening in the house. As I approached the door, I heard Serena reading aloud. "My God!" thought I, "she surely cannot have been reading aloud the whole time since we left them." We entered; the reading ceased; the servants assembled in the room, and the old Dahl read, with dignity and devotion, the short, but beautiful Evening Prayer. As this ended, the inmates and servants of the house gave each other their hand, with a friendly "good-night." The whole was a peaceful scene, which did the heart good.

When we were again alone, I observed that Serena looked weary. She coughed sometimes, and the cough did not at all please me; but, as I looked at her with an inquisitive uneasiness, she smiled at me so kindly and cheerfully, as if she would remove from me this impression. When I was taking leave, and wished the old Dahl a good night's sleep, he said, "Sleep has not been for some time my friend; but I am happy enough to have a little Scheherazade by my couch, who shortens a part of the night for me through her pleasant histories; and that has she done for probably more than a 'thousand and one nights.' But perhaps thou art tired to-night, my good maiden," added he, as he looked at Serena.

"Oh! I can very well read a little longer," she replied, zealously.

I was about to put in my opposition, by a remark on the weariness of Serena's look; but, at my first "But," Serena laid her hand instantly on mine, so pressingly, so forbiddingly, that I closed my mouth again. When she accompanied me out, "Serena," said I, in a tone of reproach, "why didst thou not tell thy grandfather the truth? Thou art weary; I see it. Dost thou think that he can be satisfied that, to entertain him, thou shouldst read thyself to death? This is wrong; it is unreasonable."

"Hush! hush! thou very reasonable creature!" said Serena, smiling, and caressing me, while a tear gleamed in her eye. "Let me to-day follow my understanding; another time I will follow thine. Grandfather is not well, and to-day he is extremely out of spirits; and, if he imagined that I was not well, he would be very uneasy. I am not at all unwell; I am only a little tired; I shall be all right again presently, like a winter new moon."

"Then thou must very soon call on me, for my spirits have been for some time regularly declining."

"Ah! I suspected so. What is it, Fanny? My dear Fanny, what is it that oppresses thee

so? Sit down; let me take off your bonnet. Let me know now—"

"No, no, Serena, not now! But come soon to me, Serena."

"As soon as ever it is possible to me."

Dahl's servant accompanied me home with a lantern. It rained, and heavy as the rain drops fell my thoughts. "Shall Serena?"—so they ran—"wither in her youth, because she has endeared herself to the old people, and has made herself so indispensable to them? I wish that she was carried off—otherwise she will be utterly bewitched with this reading. Bruno would be just the man for such an exploit—but Bruno—this unquiet and not pure spirit—could he make her happy? Would not this be to fall out of the ashes into the fire? My poor, dear Serena! Like the water-lily, thou seemst destined, now to float on still, and now on stormy waves, and only to live as the ornament or the prey of them."

22d.

Yet the water-lily has its own root, although this lies hidden in the deep; and although its blossoms allow themselves to be rocked by the waves, yet it has its own firm eye-mark—heaven! And now from the blossom of the water to the blossom of the valley—to Serena. To-day, in the cold, dark morning, she surprised me, and I confess it—surprised me in tears. I was ashamed of myself; and to her affectionate caresses and questions could only say, "Don't trouble yourself about it, Serena! I am to-day rather weak. Thou shouldst have come another day; to-day I am stupidly childish."

"No, to-day is the right day," replied Serena, with zealous cordiality. "It is exactly to-day that it pleases me to be here. I have had no rest since I saw thee last. Thou spakest so sorrowfully, so unlike thee. And now I am here, and shall not go away till thou hast told me what it is that lies so heavy on thy mind."

"Guard thyself from reprisals, Serena!"

"Ah! thou art ready to do battle, I hear. Well, that makes me easier. See, thou laughest! God be praised! now all will go well! But tell me, dear Fanny, tell me—"

We got into the great easy-chair together; we gossiped, we wept, we laughed together, and Serena's tenderness and sensible words lightened my heart materially. But, as I began to be more composed in myself, I began also to make assault upon her, and said, "Now comes the turn to thee, Serena! Now must thou, also, confess. No, no, thou canst not creep out; thou shalt not leave me till thou hast explained the riddle. Thou comest to-day to me; speakest with me, of me, as if there was nothing else in the world besides to talk of. Thou hast something in thy look which seems to say that eternal peace dwells in thy soul. Tell me, can it be so? I know that Bruno has asked thy hand. I know, too, that, if it has not been actually refused him, it has been shown to him at that distant and doubtful perspective which makes it very unlikely that he will obtain it. I know, too, that this has wounded him deeply: can all this be indifferent to thee?"

"No, not indifferent!" It seemed to be painful to Serena to speak on this subject.

"Dearest Serena!" I exclaimed, "pardon me; I see that I tease thee, but this time thou must let me see into thy heart. I know that Bruno loves thee extremely; thou thyself hast confessed what thou feelest for him; canst thou renounce him without pain?"

"No, not without pain—but yet without much suffering."

"Dost thou not deceive thyself? Thou sayest now, 'I do not suffer,' and art yet so pale. Thou wilt die one day, while thou art saying, 'I do not die!'"

Serena smiled sorrowfully, while she blushed, and said, "No, Fanny! of this trouble I shall not die. I have proved myself, and I know that I can bear it. In a while I shall be no longer pale; I shall become again quite composed and strong. My parents have explained to me the reasons which have influenced them not to comply with Bruno's wishes; and I see that they are right, and that they cannot possibly think otherwise. On that account I have compelled my own inclinations to silence; yes, I have laid aside all thoughts of a union with Bruno. I will live only for my parents. So long as they love me, and, through my intentions, are rendered happy, I cannot feel unhappy myself."

"Is, then, thy sense of duty so strong, is thy tenderness for them so sufficing for thy own heart; is it able to drown every wish, every bitter yearning, which, if thou lovest, thou must still feel?"

"Yes, if not, indeed, always, yet it is so on the whole. Seest thou, Fanny, in the daytime there may come some impatience, some yearning, some 'Ah!' as thou callest it, and disquiet in the heart; but, when the day is over, and I can retire to rest, and say to myself that those who tenderly cherished my childhood have during the day enjoyed comfort and pleasure through me, and think that they now rest in peace and bless their child; then, Fanny, it becomes all so quiet, so well about my heart, that I silence any 'Ah!' and am contented, and grateful for my lot."

"If thy parents yet live ten or twenty years? Every year they will require, more indispensably, thy care, and this life—Serena, thou wilt wither away before thy time; thou wilt become old in thy best years."

"And if the cheeks wrinkle, and the eyes grow dim, what then, dear Fanny, if we have but won the satisfaction of the heart? I have reflected on the future, of which thou speakest, and fear it not. If parents are not kind, and worthy of respect, it may be hard, very hard, to live entirely for them; and this may, with truth, be styled a sacrifice. But how different is it, in this case, for me; and how many charms has my life which nobody is aware of! Do I express a wish my parents do not hasten to satisfy? How many great pleasures do not their kindness and generosity confer on me? In fact, to live for such kind and venerable parents is a beautiful and noble lot."

"Thou speakest right well and eloquent, Serena!" said I, somewhat piqued; "and no one can admire thy parents more than I do; but I cannot away with it that they can never endure thy suitors; they always oppose themselves to thy marrying; and I would ask whether a good portion of selfishness does not lie in that. They will not give thee to any other, because they will keep thee for themselves, that thou mayest nurse them, read to them, and sing to them, till—"

"Franziska," interrupted Serena, with an expression of terror, "say not so. Are they not such thoughts which awaken bitterness in the heart, and cripple all our power to do good? My dear Fanny, these ideas must, with all our might, be banished, as evil tempters. For the rest, if parents will have some return for all that

they have sacrificed; if they will not be forsaken in their old age, and will retain near them the child they have cherished and brought up, is that anything to wonder at? is it anything but reasonable? Ah! I would appeal to all whose situation resembles mine, and say, 'Let us remember this, and love the fulfilment of our filial duty.'"

"And when these duties cease; when thy parents are gone, and gone, too, the best portion of thy existence, will not life appear empty to thee? Thou hast, for their sakes, separated thyself from thy young companions and their interests: thou hast gone out of the joyful and stirring track of life, in order to accompany the dying, and to smoothen his course; and now standest thou, suddenly, in solitude. Will not thy soul, also, have become a nun, which sees in the world a desert, and returns, mute, into its chill cloister?"

"I do not believe it," said Serena, as she looked up. A tear glittered in her eye: her bosom rose, as though it would fling from it a weight; and she continued, "Life is rich and beautiful; God's goodness is inexhaustible; why, then, should our hearts cease to receive it? Why should they wither away, so long as there flow rich wells of enjoyment? If they do, it must be their own fault. They contract themselves; they close themselves; they will not expand, in order to rejoice in the joy of others, to admire the beauty of the world. Ah! that is poverty of soul. My dear Fanny, I desire it not. I will keep my soul open; spring, and friendship, and song, live perpetually on the earth. Heavy and woful times may come, but they must go again; and, even while they last, shall we no longer look on the sunshine which falls on our lives, as on that which is turned away from it? And exactly on this account, best Fanny, let us say no more of what oppresses me. Let me now enjoy the sun, which greets us after so many gloomy days. See, how beautifully it lies on the green table-cover!" And she laid her fair hand in the sunshine, as if caressing it. "Let us now be happy on thy account, and since I see that thou lovest me as I do thee." And, with silent tears on her glowing countenance, Serena embraced me, and leaned her head against my shoulder.

"But Bruno, Serena? But Bruno?" I was like the devil; I would let her have no rest. "While thou consolest thyself and enjoyest life, he, who does not possess thy fortune, will be solitary and miserable."

Scarcely had I pronounced these words, when I repented them. The happy glow which illumined Serena's brow was suddenly extinguished; a cloud, a trouble, passed over it; but she collected herself, and said, with a quiet sincerity, "No, Fanny, no! Bruno will not be unhappy. No, he also will acquire peace."

"And how? And whence is this certainty?" demanded I, in astonishment.

"Ah! I know how it will come to pass. I have a presentiment, a faith which cannot deceive me. Seest thou, there will pass over a time; it will not be joyful, but it will pass over, and then Bruno will come again. Then it will be as in my childhood, and in my first youth; we shall be as brother and sister; and this bond will make us both happy. Bruno will choose himself another wife, but I shall always remain his friend, his sister. Thou shalt see that it will be so. My parents, Bruno, and thee—to love, and to live for you—oh, Fanny, how good is God!"

The bears on Spitzbergen did not fall with such fury on the huts of the sailors as my Bear

now on the hall-door. It was noon, and Serena was obliged to hasten away home. I was absent during dinner, and had to endure Bear's railery on that account; in order to reconcile him, I ordered a super-excellent cup of coffee, and, while he drank it, I sat down to play an air to the poem which I had composed during dinner, and which I now send you.

THE WATER-LILY.

From the clear water springeth
A white and lovely flower,
Beholds the sun, and bringeth
Its homage to his power.

At once its eye it turneth
Aloft in truth and love;
An offering pure it burneth
To its high God above.

Over the deeps it hovers,
Like angel's prayers so sweet;
No restless wish discovers,
Love is its bliss complete.

When howl the tempests chilly,
And heavy drench the rains,
Still calmly waves the lily
Upon the billowy plains.

Nor from the station fleeth
Where God its head did raise;
Heaven patiently it eyeth,
And hopes for better days.

Away the storms are wringing;
The purple evening round
Sheds pearls; and, softly ringing,
The harps of ocean sound.

In the sea's silver dwelling,
The Nook his song doth raise
Unto the lily, telling,
Of love which ne'er decays:

"Come, and behold all wonder
Which fills the deep, deep sea;
In meads of rose far under,
I'll sing alone to thee.

"Come down to the woodlands dreamy,
To the house with its pearly dome;
Come with the sun-rays beamy,
Love calls thee to thy home."

But the snow-pure lily, throwing
Its glance to heaven high,
In the world of light yet glowing,
Gives the singer this reply:

"He who for my love pineth
Must haste aloft to me;
Alone where God's sun shineth,
Can I belong to thee.

"Come, poet-prince of ocean,
Here all is warm and bright;
View Heaven with deep devotion,
And sing of love and light."

The dream is flown! The Necken
Sinks down to deepest gloom;
Him joy no more shall waken,
But hopeless love consume.

The same! and ever the same! makes life wearisome, especially when this monotony consists of everlasting foggy and dirty weather. Nothing prospers in this atmosphere except illness. I see Bear scarcely an hour per day; and yet his friendly look is as necessary for me as the sun. He is now, in the highest degree, uneasy on account of one of his patients, the esteemed father of a family, and will watch to-night by him. How different can life appear at different times! At times so sportive, or clear and— There fell a poor woman in the street, and spoiled her mantle. There the wind turns a gentleman's umbrella inside out. There was a damsel covered with mud by a chaise hurrying past. All three look quite wretched. The little sparrows twitter; I wish I was a sparrow!

284.

Bear is full of trouble. The father of the family is dead. He was a man in his best years,

and has left behind him a widow with seven children, of whom the greater number are small. Their only means of support was the earnings of the father. They are but recently come hither, and have neither relations nor acquaintance who can help them. The poor little things! it cuts me to the heart when I think of them.

"Hast thou nothing black that might serve for mourning for those little ones?"

"God help us, Bear! to me everything looks black; even this red cloth here. Thou sayest Serena was there. How did she look?"

"Friendly and kind as an angel of comfort."

"Good Serena!"

Bruno—one hears nothing of him. Perhaps his wretched pride is so thoroughly wounded that he gives up all thoughts of Serena. If he do, he will fall in my esteem. And Serena? Is she really as strong as she would represent? Will not this love, this pain, gnaw at her life, like a concealed worm? Everything seems to me sorrowful. I see Serena grow pale; Bruno grow gloomy; I think on the fatherless children who need food and comfort. *Ma chère mère* sits in darkness; Bear is distressed; and I—

Ah! so many things in this life give us only a glimpse of themselves, but come no farther; so many a day dawns, but never becomes clear; so many things are begun, but never ended; so that, contemplating this, one should be ready to let one's hands fall in utter discouragement, if it were, not for the consoling thought, "This is but the beginning!"

CHAPTER XX.

W—, December 4th.

You tell me, Maria, that I appear no longer like myself. You find something so desponding and sad in my letters; you inquire what is the cause. I cannot resist your soft and affectionate words, and will tell you all, though you should find me very strange and childish.

It is true that I have for some time taken a very discouraging view of life. I have not found myself well in either mind or body, and felt no pleasure in existence. Ah, Maria! I feel that I am a mother, and this feeling oppresses me. It has awakened a world of strange and anxious thoughts. I have looked forth as with a newly-acquired sense into the world, and I have discovered there a thousand dangers and sufferings on which I had never before reflected, and which all seems to threaten my child. Every step in life seems to be encompassed with snares and misfortunes. To learn to go, to read, to think, to accommodate itself to the circumstances of life—how hard, how wearisome! And then, all the troubles, from the first pains of teething to the last pains of death! all dangers of body and soul; falls down steps, into love, and sin, &c.; how fearfully, how sorrowfully, have these shapes of night started up in my soul! and I could not say to them, "Avaunt, deceitful phantoms!" because I looked around in life and saw that they are actually the daily guests in the dwellings of men. And as I became sensible of this, and the heaven looked down upon me so gloomy and cloudy, then, Maria, I trembled that my child should see the light, and yearned to hide it from the world and from suffering.

In part, I have been happy enough to overcome these sickly and painful feelings; but the worst of all, and that which oppresses me unceasingly, is, that I fear my child will not be welcome to

my husband. I fancy that I can perceive it by many signs. He never speaks of children; never expresses a wish for them; and once, when the conversation was of some one who had a great family, he threw a quick glance on me, as if to say, "Thou really wilt not have such a one?"

Ah, Maria, and immediately this becomes probable! Bear knows nothing of it, yet I think he must suspect; but it is exactly this, that he does not know of it, which takes from me all courage to discover it to him. Ah! I must also confess that my unsettled state of mind has made me, during this time, less friendly towards him. I have, in some degree, avoided him; I have withdrawn myself when he has tenderly put his arm round me. I have seen that it grieved him, and yet I could not alter my behaviour. Yet I have myself had, however, the most to endure. Bear is no longer young; he loves undisturbed quiet at home; and it is not to be wondered at that he should dislike the crying and noise of children, and all the trouble which they occasion. And then—after the loss of his property, it must be oppressive to him to have new expenses, new cares to support, which, instead of decreasing, continually increase. And if I should have two girls at once, and then, according to Stellan's prophecy, eight in addition, what will he think? How will he be satisfied with it? You cannot tell, Maria, how these thoughts weighed me down!

My poor little maiden! It is not enough that many a suffering, many a bitter experience, must be thy lot in the world, but probably thy father will not once welcome thee into life with a smile; perhaps he will press thee with a secret sigh to his bosom. And, if thou shouldst lose thy mother early, perhaps even at thy birth—for how many women die in giving life to their children, and I am not strong—who, then, my little maiden, will sit fondly by thy cradle? Who will soothe thy disquiet into peace? Who will, later, comfort thee in difficulties? Who will love thee, and teach thee to conduct thyself? Where wilt thou find ever-open arms? My tears flow, and I must conclude.

54.

But now I dry up my tears, and proceed. Last evening I sat alone, and worked at a little child's cap. My heart was heavy, and my unshed tears choked me. Bear was not come home. The wind blew strongly without, and sounded disagreeably to me. It also occasioned that I did not hear Bear's arrival before he opened, as usual, abruptly, the door of the room where I sat. I hastily threw my work under a shawl, blushed, and had scarcely time to bid him good-evening. Bear looked unwontedly cheerful, and exclaimed, loudly, "Good-evening, my little wife; how is it with thee?"

"Very well," answered I; and, in order to ward off farther questions, asked, myself, "What hast thou in thy hand there?"

"Only an ugly pasteboard box. An old woman bothered me to buy it. We will see if thou canst make it of any use to hold thy combs, hair-pins, and so on." He set the great pretended box on the table, loosened the cloth in which it was wrapped, with a horrible grimace, and before my eyes lay a picture in a costly gold frame. Two figures, as it were, stood living before me in it. The most beautiful Mother-of-God hovered on the clouds with the Child-God on her arms. It was a copy of Raphael's Madonna Sistina, in black chalk, by the clever Miss Röhl. I saw the heavenly peace in Maria's counte-

nance; I saw the divine, all-illuminating glance of the child, and I became so comfortable, so heavenly comfortable in my mind, I could not speak, and, without being aware of it, ran sweet, happy tears on the glass of the picture. I had forgotten all around me; I knew not whether I was on earth or in heaven, when I found myself encircled by Bear's arms, and heard him say, with a tender, but affectionately upbraiding voice, "Fanny, why should I not know that I am a father?"

In this moment I became violently affected. I hid my head on his shoulder, and could scarcely stammer forth, "Oh, Bear! I was afraid that you would not be pleased!"

My Maria! how did I feel, as I saw Bear drop on his knees before me, as he kissed my hands, my dress, while, with great tears in his eyes, and with a faltering voice, he exclaimed, "I not pleased? I not happy? I am delighted! My Fanny, my wife, my child!" In such emotion I had never seen him, and my heart dissolved itself in inexpressible love and joy.

This hour was beautiful, was divine! But one such in this earthly life, and one may be contented; one has understood what heaven is.

After our first extreme agitation had subsided, Bear seated himself by me, and lectured me, half in a tender and sportive, and half in a serious tone, on my strange secrecy. My heart was open; I let him read it; I let him see all which of late had been working there. At first he smiled, then he became more serious, and at last he said, somewhat out of humour, "But that is very silly, Fanny! Where has been thy reliance on the Most High? Does this miserable fear become those who believe in him and his goodness?"

"Ah!" I said, sighing, "I believe firmly on him; and yet children fall down stairs, or out of the window, and become cripples or idiots for life."

"Well, and what then?" said Bear, and looked me in the face with a glance which at once was firm and clear; I did not imagine he could have made his eyes so large. I cast my eyes down, and answered, softly, "And children may also become unfortunate."

"Well, and what then?" exclaimed Bear, and looked at me as before.

"And what then! and what then!" I cried, impatiently, and was very near getting angry; but Bear's look again struck me, and penetrated into my inmost soul. I understood him now; understood his manly strength, his love and piety. "Bear," said I, with contrition, "I will trust, with thee. Come what will, I will not murmur nor despair; but hold fast my faith in the everlasting goodness."

Bear clasped me to his heart.

I was somewhat anxious to avoid going farther into the fears which I had entertained, but he had laid himself out to question me, and he would not desist till he had drawn all forth. When I alluded to my doubt regarding himself, he became angry, and said, "How couldst thou think so ill of me, Fanny? How couldst thou imagine me to be so pitiful, so unnatural a wretch? This only can excuse thee, that thou wert unwell."

"But, Bear—now that we are become poor, it will, indeed, be a matter of great anxiety to bring up and educate children, especially if we have many—if we actually have ten girls!" I laughed as I said this, but it was with fearful eyes.

"That will be done, even. We shall find means, never fear. Children, that are received in love, bring a blessing with them. The more children, the more *paternosters*."

"But the education, the education!" sighed I; "what burdens this brings with it, when we consider the demands of the present day!"

"I ask the d—l after the demands of the present time, in many respects," muttered Bear; and added, with a serious and cordial kindness, "We will love our children, Fanny! We will bring them up in a clear and steady fear of God. We will teach them order and diligence. What relates to talent and a finer accomplishment, they shall receive that, too, if we have the means; if we have them not, then do not let us trouble ourselves about them. The chief thing is, that they become good and useful men; they will then find their way both here and hereafter. Thou, my Fanny, wilt early teach them what is in the hymn which thou art so fond of singing:

"He who can read his *paternoster* right
Fears neither witch nor devil!"

Bear's words, and mild and manly expression, took hold on and elevated my heart. "No!" I exclaimed, "I will no longer be anxious and fearful. I cannot be so with thee, my Bear. And thou, little exiled prophet!"—I took up the little cap—"come forth to the light, and speak openly of the mystery!"

How delighted was Bear with the little cap! He had never yet seen anything so neat and pretty. Bear held it on his great fist, and smiled at it, as if he already saw it adorn the head of his child. The whole evening was a succession of the most joyful scenes and feelings. He made me drink one or two cups of tea, and sought to divert my attention with bread and butter. He himself took scarcely anything. He looked at me, and at the little cap, with tears in his eyes. We were happy.

9th.

Where is my sadness, Maria? Where my discoveries of evil? Where are my anxious forebodings? It is as if all these had taken their flight at once, never again to return. That lovely picture hangs in my bedroom. I contemplate it many times a day. I perform before it my morning and evening worship, and it speaks to me; it says to me all that is consolatory, beautiful, and divine. I am now writing before it; and it seems to me as if the Madonna and the Jesus-child looked down upon me with a look of blessing. Oh, my child! thy mother will no longer be in anxiety on thy behalf. Thou wilt have a tender protector. His glance rests on thee, as the sun's rays fall on the yet unfolded bud. As he is immortal, so art thou immortal. As he went to God, so shalt thou, by him conducted, go to the eternal Father. Whatever may be dispensed to thee on earth, we will not despair—we will not, my child, lose our confidence. We will believe that He, who has called thy spirit to existence, will, sooner or later, unfold it, and conduct it to himself.

CHAPTER XXI.

W—, December 16th.

BEFORE I was aware of it, I became, one day, quite in love with Bruno. Yes, a man may shoot horses, and even dogs, when he is so kind towards his fellow-men. Do you remember what I told you of the family so much to be pitied—of

the widow with the many children? Well, then, they are comfortable; they have found help. Bruno has lent the widow a capital, with which she is enabled to begin a profitable business; and, besides this, has wholly undertaken the bringing up of the two elder boys. How happy are the rich, who can render such effectual help! Bruno has done all in the greatest stillness, and commanded the widow to say nothing of it; but, in her joy, she communicated it to Serena, and she was here this forenoon and related the whole to me. A beautiful joy animated her mild countenance while she spoke of it; but, delighted as I was, I could not avoid remarking that the action was not, indeed, so great, but was rather something natural to a rich man. "That is true," said Serena, "and my grandfather has often done such things as these, when he was in more prosperous circumstances. But I could not see Madame E.'s joy without blessing him who was the cause of it."

At this moment some one came. Our conversation was interrupted, and Serena went. The old Dahl is better. Thank God! all is now better. The weather is better, the sick are better. Bear is in good spirits, and my pupils are improving, too. In the house, we are making sausages for Christmas. I am helping to make them, and singing songs with Sissa and Bengta. *Ma chère mère* learns to write and play, and is happy in Bruno; who, on his part, behaves most admirably to her; but, as Jean Jacques says, looks gloomy and self-consumed.

Why does he wear himself away? Why does he avoid those who can and would pour balm into his heart?

19th.

I went, yesterday forenoon, to the Dahls'. Serena was in the anteroom, busy with two young ladies, who were instructing her in the lovely art of making artificial flowers. Her cheeks had a livelier colour than they have for some time past had; and this rejoiced me. She embraced me, and softly said to me, "Thou wilt go in to my grandmamma a while, while I stay here? Try to enliven her, Fanny; speak of something cheerful to her, she is to-day so cast down."

I found Madame Dahl in her bedroom. She sat there alone, in her great armed-chair, and sighed deeply. She received me with motherly kindness, spoke with me concerning myself, and gave me good and prudent counsel; and then fell again into a sad silence, which she broke with these words, "Tell me honestly, Franziska, dost thou not think that Serena has much gone off of late? Does she not seem to thee to grow thinner and paler every day?"

I answered that I thought to-day she looked healthier than when I saw her last.

"But, at any rate, dost thou not find her much changed since the summer? Has she not, especially within the last month, looked very much worse?"

I could not deny that this was the case; but added, that Serena would soon be better, and that she thought so herself. "Ah! my dear child," said Madame Dahl, "that gives me no comfort. Serena is exactly like her late mother, my dear, blessed Benjamina. It was exactly thus that she began to look some months before her death; exactly such pale cheeks, such an unearthly look as this. It was just so she smiled, and said to us, 'I am very well. I shall soon be better.' And she never complained, and would never allow that any one should be uneasy

ry on her account. So she was till her last moment. Ah, ah! Serena will soon follow her mother, unless she has some help."

Madame Dahl wiped away her tears, and I did the same, and then said, "Serena is not bodily ill: it is only her mind, her heart, that has suffered; and shall she not have strength enough to overcome this suffering, and to regain her perfect equanimity?"

"Yes, strength to suffer without complaining; to be perfectly resigned; but not strength enough not to die. Ah! dear child! there is something in this love, which has continued since childhood, which has taken deep root in her heart. Already as a child she hung on the wild boy with her whole soul. When he came, she laughed and stretched out her little arms towards him; when he went, she was troubled and still; and I have observed that she now feels towards him exactly as she did then. I begin to fear that this love has grown with her growth; and that I have, indeed, said to my husband; but he would hear nothing of it. It grieves me to have displeased him, but I had no rest after what I saw yesterday."

"What was that, my dear Madame Dahl?"

"We had just drunk tea. Serena was with us. The dear child probably saw that my eyes were fixed on her, for she became suddenly more talkative and more merry than usual. She related to us many things, over which we were obliged heartily to laugh, and I had nearly forgotten my uneasiness, and was disposed to believe that we were right happy. When we had, probably, thus laughed and talked for an hour, Serena went out, and directly afterward it was as if some one had said to me, 'Go and see after her.' I went softly into her chamber, and there found her, her forehead leaned against the window. I grasped her head with my hands, and obliged her to turn her dear face towards me. Ah, Franziska! it was bathed in tears. She would have hidden them from me at first; and when she could not, she attributed them to a book which she had been reading, and which had excited her. I made as if I believed her; but I perceived now what hour the clock had struck, and I went away with a heart heavier than it ever can be in death. In the evening, I would not say anything to my husband to disturb his night's rest; and, besides this, Serena came in, and began with her red eyes to read aloud, as if nothing whatever had happened. But this morning I have communicated to him my fears, but he still believes that I have frightened myself with my fancies. Ah! his eyes are dull, and cannot see what mine see."

"But if Bruno shows himself worthy of Serena, will her good parents still delay to make her and him happy?"

"Yes—if! That is an important *if*, my dear child. It seems to me very strange of him, that, since the day on which he solicited Serena's hand, he has not once been here. And there was so much justice in what my husband had said to him—Bruno must see that. If he really loves Serena with his whole heart, this postponement of the matter ought not to keep him away from our house. It was a good action of his towards the E—— family. Almost every one that we meet speaks of him with distinction; but, as matters now stand, we may and can do nothing to call him back again. All must now depend on himself and on his behaviour."

At this moment came in old Mr. Dahl. He

saluted me friendly, although not so cheerfully as usual; went to his wife, and tapped her on the shoulder. It seemed to me as though he had somewhat good to say, and that he would fain be alone; I said, therefore, that I would seek Serena, and went. In the mean time, I would not disturb the flower-council, and I took another way to Serena's room, where I thought to wait for her. Her room is pretty and cheerful. One sees that her affectionate parents wished that she should have it very agreeable; and I know not what atmosphere of peace, order, and pure taste filled the neat abode, and made me there experience a peculiar pleasure. Several paintings adorned the walls, some of them Serena's own work. These distinguished themselves by the simplicity of the subjects, and by the care and truth with which they were finished. After I had contemplated these, a green curtain attracted my curiosity. I drew it aside, and, on well-arranged book-shelves, glowed the names of the classical writers of Sweden and Denmark—of Denmark, poor in people, but rich in talent; small in extent, but great in its intellectual aspiration. They were all old acquaintances of mine; and, charmed at finding them there, I touched the dear volumes with a feeling of affection, and said, "Thanks, thanks for all the strength, all the good, and the heavenly enjoyment that you have afforded to me and to many!"

On the table lay a book open. It was "Hernell's Sketches." A pencil lay in the open book. I saw that a part of the page was underlined, and I read:

"Life must become light, if it will not change itself into a lethargic sadness, into an actual death. In this gloomy disposition of mind, a man cannot prepare himself for immortality, because he understands it not, and strives not to make himself worthy of it. We call to mind moments of departed pleasure more vividly than the past hours of sorrow. This is a hint that that life was dear to us. Death must not be regarded as a liberation from prison; it is only a step out of the valley to the top of the mountain, where we enjoy a more extended prospect, and where we breathe lightly—out of the valley, into which, indeed, the light and warmth of the sun penetrate, and where also the love of God embraces us. Learn properly to understand and to love life, if thou wilt rightly understand and love eternity. A true Christian must already be happy here on earth—that is the problem of life, which every one of us must with all our power endeavour to solve; that difficult problem, whose solution so few have achieved, and which has caused the multitude so much conflict. Yet the more and the greater are the difficulties, the more honourable it is to carry off the victory. MAN MAY BE DISAPPOINTED IN HIS GREATEST HOPES IN LIFE, WITHOUT, ON THAT ACCOUNT, BECOMING UNHAPPY. I have long suspected, and am daily more and more, by the course of the world, and through my own inward experience, convinced, that there is no other actual misfortune, except this only—NOT TO HAVE GOD FOR OUR FRIEND."

I also underlined the beautiful and strengthening words. I would wish to have them framed in gold. On a little loose strip of paper lay in the book, beside this passage, some words in Serena's own hand. I read them; they were these: "Yes, all may be borne; all may be sanctified; all in life and in the heart may be converted to good, through prayer and labour."

"A great truth, Serena," thought I, "which I

most farther discons with thee." But Serena came not; I became impatient, and went to seek her. I found her not in the anteroom, but in the sleeping-room. I heard voices, the door stood ajar, and I became witness of this scene. Serena kneeled on a footstool at the feet of her grandmother, and had thrown one arm round her neck; her other hand was given to the old Dahl, who regarded her with an unspeakable expression of tenderness and care in his venerable countenance, while she, with a quiet exultation in look and tone, said to them, "Be not uneasy, be not troubled on my account, my kind, kind parents! Believe me, I am quiet, I am contented; I am your happy and grateful child. I have suffered a short struggle, it is true, and it could not be prevented; but I am already better, and I shall soon be perfectly strong again. Only don't be uneasy!"

I stole quietly away; I would not listen, neither would I disturb these loving ones. I went back to Serena's room, continued there my observations, took up that page again whereon Serena had written, and held it yet in my hand as she entered. Serena blushed, called me curious, but embraced me with silent affection. "Don't be angry with me, Serena," I said; "thou must, on the contrary, be right good and humble, since I stand here with the purpose to make thee some reproaches."

"Make me reproaches!" exclaimed Serena, smiling; "now let me hear them."

"Don't look so lively and secure, Serena! I am very seriously angry with thee," and I now related what Madame Dahl had told me of the scene of last evening, as well as that of which I had that moment been an eyewitness; and added, zealously, "That is not honest of thee, Serena! That is needless, irrational self-torture. Why represent thyself to thy parents other than what thou really art? Wherefore infuse into them a false security, while sorrow consumes thee, and the deeper, the more thou shroudest it within thyself?"

"And what wouldst thou have me do, dear Fanny?" said Serena, while tears forced themselves into her eyes. "Shall I occasion my aged parents to suffer griefs which they have not the power to remove? Shall I embitter their days with my weakness? And would this help me? Would it do me any good? Oh no, Fanny! That thou canst not wish! I am convinced that they act for me right and affectionately; I am convinced that on our side nothing now can or ought to be done. It has grieved me that Bruno could absent himself so long from us—it seems to me unfriendly, yes, hard of him; but I have accustomed myself to wait, and I will yet wait more patiently, for he will one day come again; that I feel and am persuaded. But, Fanny, let us not now talk of it; let us not now think of me; we will rather think of anything else. There is now much to be done in preparation for the Golden Marriage. That will be a great, a charming day, Fanny. Think only of the happy and virtuous united life of half a century! Then Christmas is also at hand! Thou and thy good man must eat your Christmas welcome with us. Madame E.'s children are also coming. I have begged my parents to allow me to prepare a little Christmas pleasure for them. Thou wilt come? Let us go out immediately, and purchase our Christmas gifts. The weather is beautiful, and I will be your cashier."

We went. It was a pleasure to see the people

in the market, and the joy and eagerness of the children, who, by the side of their parents, hopped about on the new-fallen snow. Serena was delighted with the scene. We exchanged our remarks; we made our purchases. I bought an *Attrape* for Bear. Two pleasant hours fled; and Serena seemed, in her interest and activity for others, to have forgotten that she herself was not happy.

CHRISTMAS DAY.

The pleasant Christmas-eve at the Dahls'—the rejoicing of the children over their Christmas tree, full of lights, and presents, and sweetmeats—Serena's motherly behaviour towards them—my pleasure in it—the Christmas-eve night—all this I pass over in haste, in order to proceed thither, where Serena, I, and Bear, agreed to go together, and whither thou, dear Maria, must now accompany me; namely, to

THE EARLY MASS OF CHRISTMAS DAY.

We were in church. Its great and beautiful arched roof shone with a thousand tapers. Altar, columns, choir, all glittered—all was so full of light, and splendour, and gladness. The organ was yet silent. There prevailed a solemn stillness in the church, which, by the light rustling of the moving multitude, seemed rather to be heightened than disturbed. We seated ourselves in the choir. A long row of tapers opposite to us threw a powerful light upon us. "Thou lookest quite glorified," said Bear to me, as I seated myself. Serena had to me the same appearance. My soul was full of a joyful devotion.

Not far from us, with his back leaned against a pillar, and overshadowed by it, stood a tall, dark figure, evidently sunk in thought. It was Bruno. He saw us not; his head was bowed down; for him the outer world was not there; but, at the first tone of the mighty organ, he started and looked up. His eyes and those of Serena met; he made no salutation; she made none; they appeared to be wholly lost in their mutual gaze; and I gazed on them. They seemed to me like spirits which, after long sufferings, meet, and are again united in a happy world. Their countenances were pale, but an ineffable expression of love illuminated them at once. It was a glance of deep and mutual recognition. Serena's eyelids sunk, wet with tears. Bruno was soon at her side, and, kneeling down on her foot-board, he said, with a soft, but not whispering voice, "Allow me to pray with you." Serena held the prayer-book so that he could see. As their voices were raised and united themselves in a deep, harmonious tone, there went through me a presentiment that these two were destined for each other, that their union is determined in heaven, since it is founded in this sympathy of souls, which is the condition and the guarantee of an immortal wedded felicity.

The moment that this thought arose in me, the question also presented itself to my mind whether Bear and I sympathized. I felt a desire to ask him what he thought of it; but, as I looked at him, as he stood beside me, and, without looking right or left, without being conscious of what was passing near him, was singing his song of praise with a powerful bass voice, and from the bottom of his heart, I was ashamed of my foolish thoughts, and joined in his hymn, feeling inwardly that I revered and loved him with my whole soul.

Between Bruno and Serena were now neither word nor look farther exchanged; but, as she

stooped her head in prayer, he bowed his also; when her finger pointed out the verse that should be sung, he followed it; it appeared to make him happy to pray with her. As we left the church he was at her side, and made way for her through the crowd. He drove us in the carriage; and, when this stopped at the gate of the Dahls', he assisted us to dismount. His face was lit up by the moon, and had a beautiful expression of soft and exalted feeling. "I shall see you soon again," said he to Serena, as he kissed her hand. He then shook hands with Bear and myself, and departed. I have never yet seen him so cheerful and friendly.

We drank our second coffee with the aged Dahls. Serena related to her grand-parents, with undissembled joy, our meeting with Bruno, and his promise very soon to visit them. It appeared to give the old people pleasure.

"What a morning!" said Serena to me, as we were an instant alone together. "Oh, Fanny! life has beautiful, wonderful hours. As I beheld him in the clear light—as he sang with me—ah! I fear only, that from this moment my worship was no longer pure—all my prayers were for him!"

May no one have greater sins to repent of! But now I must leave thee, Maria, for the carriage is come to fetch us to dine with *Ma chère mère*.

January 2d.

Bear and I have had a quarrel. You recollect my secret—the music-lessons. They arrived at a grand *débat*. Bear came in, one day, in the middle of the "*Bataille de Prague*." He was confounded. After the battle came an alarm. May all matrimonial contentions so begin and so end! then would there much oftener be *Tu Deum* sung in families.

5th.

Last evening we had a little select circle assembled and united in a great enjoyment. And who were these select? Who should they be besides myself—long life to modesty!—my other self, Bruno, Serena, and the patriarchs, in whose house we were. There was yet a seventh guest there, to complete the constellation, one who elevated all the rest into his own heaven, and this was—Poesy. Bruno read aloud Tegnér's "*Ard*," and this splendid and never-to-be-too-often-read poem, now produced by Bruno's soul-full voice, seemed more transporting than ever. Serena's needle dreamed in her hand, and her eye seemed to have become ear; and we all, old and young, were changed in heart. We became mild, warm, and affectionate. High and beautiful is the lot of the great poet. His lyre is the world, and the strings on which he plays are the souls of men. When he wills it, these tones are called forth, and melt together into a divine harmony.

Thus it was in our little circle. A sweet, inexpressible pleasure diffused itself among us; we made, as it were, only one happy, loving family. Bruno's otherwise now dark, now flaming glance, beamed with a softened radiance, and rested on Serena with an expression of deep but sorrowful love. Serena was so happy, so gay, so beautiful, that it seemed as if all the darkness in the world would become light before her. She seemed, in her blissful heart, to desire to embrace and bless every living creature. She saluted me, as we went, with tears of joy in her eyes, while she said, "Seest thou that he comes again? Seest thou that all will turn out as I said? We

shall become one family; united, peaceful, and happy."

"Yes!" thought I, "if the holy spirit of Poetry were but ever with us and in us; but—ah!"

CHAPTER XXII.

W—, January 12th.

On all sides here we are arming for the Golden Marriage. I do not know if I have already told you that the great day falls on the 20th of this month. The whole city and country take an interest in it. It is as if all the people in the place here were related to the old Dahls. Their eight children, with all their families, are expected. I, too, am in action on account of the feast. I help Serena as well as I can, and practise with Bruno a choral song, which is to be sung at the festivity. Bruno has composed the music; he is really a master, and it is a pleasure to put one's self under his direction. The persons who are to compose the choir assemble at our house twice a week, and are trained by the strict master, before whom we all stand somewhat in awe. Serena has so much to do in preparation for the feast, and so much to do for all the uncles, aunts, and cousins, that I see very little of her. Once she came and mixed her voice in the chorus, but then vanished all devotion out of the practising; Bruno's body, indeed, sat at the instrument, but his soul is with her. He is often, in the evening, at the Dahls'. He endeavours to gain the good-will of the old people; talks with them, and reads to them. Serena takes her rest; persuades herself that she has acquired a brother, and is happy.

16th.

The young people come from east to west—Dahls there. Brave men, handsome children; how some families do flourish! A swarm of cousins encountered one another here at every step; brotherships and friendships are concluded; the whole city is in motion. A variety of balls and festivities are to follow in the train of the Golden Wedding; even *Ma chère mère* will give a great dinner-party. I shall probably not see much of this pleasure and gayety, since I must keep myself quiet; but I shall hold the joyful feast in my heart.

Bruno is again in a changeable and more gloomy humour, and the gladness is quenched in Serena's looks.

Miss Hellevi Hausgiebel is, on this occasion, invaluable as counsellor and helper for the Dahl family. She has undertaken the arrangement of a series of living pictures, with which the aged Dahls are to be surprised. She has taken Lagman Hök into her councils; and they drape, and explain, and discuss (dispute too, very likely, a little, occasionally), and arrange, etc. I am persuaded that we shall see something beautiful come out of it. There will be a great multitude of people assembled at the Dahls' on the eve of the great day; and this is as it should be. This marriage must be as publicly and ceremoniously celebrated, as a first marriage should be conducted quietly and modestly. Then, people go on board to sail over a sea where winds and waves are often stormy; but here, on the contrary, in the Golden Marriage, they have completed their voyage; they have reached the haven, and can calmly hoist the flag of victory.

Ma chère mère comes to the feast, and I shall have the pleasure of keeping her for the night with me. I will myself roast the coffee, that she

may enjoy in the highest perfection the beverage which she prefers to all others.

I have a variety of things to say to thee of the younger branches of the Dahl family, but must defer it till after the marriage, when I shall have more time; but, in passing, I must tell thee that I have selected a favourite from among them. She is named Mattea; is a tall, thoroughly plain, but thoroughly good creature, of twenty years of age, who has won my heart by her joyous, open-hearted disposition, her sincere love for Serena, and her splendid playing on the piano.

January 21st.

With whatever thou mayest be employed—be it with the last stitch of a stocking, or the last word of a compliment, or with the contemplation of a portrait, or with a romance of Bulwer, or a discourse on the immortality of the soul with B., or the preparation of a citron-cream, or the answer to a love-letter—leave all in an instant, and sit thee reverently down, and read that chapter which I am preparing to write, and which is entitled

THE GOLDEN MARRIAGE.

If you wish to learn the true value of marriage, if you wish to see what this union may be for two human hearts, and for life, then observe not the wedded ones in their honeymoon, nor by the cradle of their first child; not at a time when novelty and hope yet throw a morning glory over the young and new-born world of home; but survey them rather in the more remote years of manhood, when they have proved the world and each other, when they have conquered many an error, and many a temptation, in order to become only the more united to each other; when labours and cares are theirs; when, under the burden of the day, as well as in hours of repose, they support one another, and find that they are sufficient for each other. Or survey them still farther in life; see them arrived at that period when the world, with all its changes and agitations, rolls far away from them; when every object around them becomes ever dimmer to them; when their house is still, when they are solitary, but yet stand there hand in hand, and each reads in the other's eyes only love; when they, with the same memories and the same hopes, stand on the boundaries of another life, into which they are prepared to enter; of all the desires of this being retaining only the one, that they may die on the same day—yes, then behold them! And, on that account, turn now to the patriarchs, and to the Golden Marriage.

There is, indeed, something worth celebrating, thought I, as I awoke in the morning. The sun appeared to be of the same opinion, for it shone on the snow-covered roof of the aged pair. I availed myself of the morning hour, wrapped myself in my cloak, kissed Bear, and trudged forth to carry my congratulations to the old people, and to see if I could in anything be helpful to Serena. The aged pair sat in the anteroom, clad in festal garb, each in their own easy-chair. Two snuff-boxes, hymn-book, and a large nosegay of fresh flowers, lay on the table. The sun shone in through snow-white curtains. It was cheerful and peaceful in the room; and the patriarch appeared in the sunny light, as if surrounded by a glory. With emotion I pronounced my congratulation, and was embraced by them as by a father and mother.

"A lovely day, Madame Werner!" said the old gentleman, as he looked towards the window.

"Yes, beautiful indeed!" I answered: "so beautiful that the angels of God must rejoice in it. It is the feast of love and truth on the earth."

The two old people smiled, and reached each other a hand. There arose a great commotion in the hall. It was the troop of children and children's children, who all, in holiday garb, and with joyous looks, streamed in to bring their wishes of happiness to their venerable parents. It was charming to see these groups of lovely children cling round the old people, like young saplings round the aged stems. It was charming to see the little rosy mouths turned up to kiss, the little arms stretching to embrace them, and to hear the clamour of loving words and exulting voices.

I availed myself of the moment quietly to retire and to seek Serena. I found her in the kitchen, surrounded with people, and dealing out viands: for there was to-day a great distribution of food and money by the Dahls to the poor of the place. Serena accompanied the gifts with friendly looks and words, and won blessings for her parents. When the distribution was at an end, Serena accompanied me to her room; there I looked inquiringly into her friendly countenance, and said, joyously, "Thou lookest quite happy to-day, Serena!"

"And how could it be otherwise?" answered she; "all around me to-day are happy. My dear old parents seem to-day to have received their youth again; and yesterday, thou shouldst have heard, Fanny, as they sat before the evening fire, and went through their whole life, and spoke of what now stood before them—it was so beautiful, so solemn!"

Miss Hellevi Hausgiebel here interrupted us; we must follow her up to the second story. Here all was dust, noise, and confusion. One saloon was in the act of being hung with drapery and prepared for a ball; another was preparing for the proposed *tableaux*. Miss Hellevi, who already saw in spirit how the whole would be arranged, flew, lightly as a bird, among scaffolding, cordage, and a thousand things which stood about, while she said, "See, dear Madame Werner, this will be so, and this so. Won't that be good? Won't it have a good effect?"

"Madame Werner!" called Lagman Hök, down from a ladder, on whose top he stood aloft, with the face of Don Quixote, "won't this lighting-up have a fine effect against the yellow drapery?"

"Excellent! splendid!" I exclaimed, with secret anxiety; "but, Lagman Hök, that chandelier will certainly fall! Good Miss Hausgiebel! this scaffolding will certainly all come down together!"

The light and lively Miss Bird's Nest laughed at my obvious terror; and I hastened, my ears deafened with the hammering, out of the uncomfortable purgatory which is to conduct to an æsthetic paradise; but I did not the less praise those who there busied themselves, although I had myself rather pluck roses without having to feel their thorns. After I had accompanied Serena to other quarters, and consulted with her how various things were to be arranged, I took my leave, with the promise to be there early in the evening. But, before I set out, I became witness to a ceremonial scene. A deputation from the corporation of the city appeared, in its name, and presented to the venerable pair a large gilt silver cup, as a testimony of the esteem and gratitude of their fellow-citizens. I missed *Ms*

chère mère, in the place of the mayor; what a stately speech would she not have delivered!

I was glad at dinner to tell over all these things to Bear. His mouth watered to hold his Golden Wedding. To that we probably shall not arrive, but we may possibly attain our silver one. Ah! I wonder whether our ten daughters will then stand round us! It would be a lovely marriage-garland. See! there has fallen a tear at the thought of it!

At six o'clock in the evening, Bear and his little wife strolled, arm-in-arm, to the wedding-house. In the street in which it lay light burned against light; one window was lit up after another; cressets burned at the corners of the street; and presently the street was bright as day, and a great number of people wandered, with glad countenances, up and down in the still, mild, winter evening. The city was illuminated in honour of its patriarchs; the house of the Dahls' itself had a sombre look in comparison with the others, but the light was within.

Exactly as we were endeavouring to enter the gate, through a crowd of people who had collected there in order to see the arrivals, my eye fell on a figure which stood among the rest. It was wrapped in a great black mantle; but the two large burning eyes, which flashed forth from beneath this covering, made me start, and I thought, involuntarily, on Hagar. In the same instant, the figure drew itself back; and, uncertain whether I was right in my conjecture, but with a secret presentiment of misfortune, I entered the marriage-house.

At the door of the saloon Serena met me. She wore a white garland in her light-brown hair, and, at the sight of her, vanished every dark thought. Ah! how charming was she not, this evening, in the light, white dress, with her friendly blue eyes, her pure brow, and the heavenly smile on her lips! Had I but had the power to paint her at this moment! As every flower has its moment of perfect beauty, so has a human being moments in which his highest and loveliest life blooms forth—in which he appears what he actually is—what he is in the depth of God's intentions. These fleeting revelations—for there is nothing abiding on the earth—these are that which the genuine artist seeks to lay hold of; and, therefore, it is unjust to say of a successful portrait, especially that of an intellectual person, that it is flattered. But whither am I wandering? I was speaking of Serena. She was so friendly, so amiable to everybody, and yet, I know it, she was not in herself happy! Friends and relatives arrived; the rooms became filled. *Ma chère mère* entered with great stir. She was conducted by Bruno; and, although blind, was as high and stately as ever. Heartily she greeted the venerable pair, while she said, with a loud voice, "Old friends and old ways I do not quit willingly, and therefore I am here. I am come to wish you happiness, my friends, on this your day of honour. 'Every one is the artificer of his own fortune,' says the proverb; and, consequently, if any one would question whether you, my two honoured friends, are happy to-day, it would, I say, be just the same as if any one should question whether the king be a nobleman. It is as certain as the Amen in the Church. God bless you!" She shook them heartily by the hand.

Jane Maria was richly dressed, and amiable. Bruno was gloomy. His dark eyes followed constantly the light Serena, but received thence no illumination. He was silent and introverted.

By eight o'clock all the guests were assembled. They had drunk tea, eaten ice, and so on, and now fell at once a great silence. The two old people seated themselves in two easy-chairs, which stood near each other in the middle of the saloon, on a richly-embroidered mat. Their children and children's children gathered in a half circle round them. A clergyman of noble presence stepped forward, and pronounced an oration on the beauty and holiness of marriage. He concluded with a reference to the life of the venerable pair; which was a better sermon on the excellence of marriage, for life, and for the human heart, than his speech itself. What he said was true and touching. There was not a dry eye in the whole company. Bear and I leaned against each other. A solemn and affectionate mood had affected all, and there prevailed a deep silence through the numerous assembly, but it was not that of weariness.

In the mean time, all the preparations for the second division of the festival were complete, and the company ascended up the steps, covered with matting to the second story. Here the *tableaux* were presented, whose beauty and grace exceeded everything that I had anticipated. These, at some opportunity, I will describe. The last consisted of a well-arranged group of the whole body of the descendants of the Dahls. The chorus was sung during the representation of this *tableaux*, and went off extremely well, especially when we heard it the second time. The whole representation gave general and great pleasure. As the chorus ceased for the second time, and the curtain fell for the last time, the doors of the dance-saloon flew open, a dazzling light streamed thence, and a lively music set all the feet and hearts of the young in motion. And now, Maria, take out your *eau de Cologne* bottle, and prepare yourself for a catastrophe, which was as startling as it was unæsthetic. Realities are sometimes sadly prosaic.

The old Dahl had advanced into the dance-saloon, on the arm of his granddaughter; the guests followed in lively conversation, when I suddenly became aware of a movement in the great chandelier, like that which had excited my fears in the forenoon. Serena, on whose arm her grandfather leaned, and was speaking to some of those who were near, stood at this moment exactly under it. I raised a cry of terror, "Take care! the sconce falls!" All eyes glanced in affright upward; but, with the speed of lightning, Bruno darted forward and lifted Serena out of danger, in the same instant that the splendid chandelier, with its sixty lights and thousand lustres, fell with a deafening thunder. Bruno himself received a heavy blow on the head. He turned pale and staggered. "Bruno! Bruno!" cried Serena, with the unmistakable and heart-rending tone of love, and caught him in her arms as he fell to the ground. He threw his arms around her, and pressed her to his bosom; a blissful smile, like a sunbeam, appeared on his countenance as he sunk and became unconscious.

It is not to be described what a sensation this created in the company. In one moment, a misfortune, a declaration of love, and a death—or what most perfectly resembled it! one might lose his senses with less than this. I confess that I know little of what now took place, till I, a moment afterward, found myself in a still and dimly-lighted chamber.

Bruno lay upon a sofa. He had been bleed

but had not yet returned to consciousness. Bear stood by him, and looked quite beside himself. *Ma chère mère* supported his head on her lap; she was silent, but the tears streamed from her blind eyes, and rolled slowly over her colourless cheeks. Not far distant sat Madame Dahl, and Serena lay before her on her knees, and hid her face in her bosom; their arms were thrown round each other. The old gentleman stood near, his eyes riveted on his child; and I stood also by them, speaking consoling words to the nearly unconscious Serena.

"Where is she?" exclaimed Bruno, awaking out of his deathlike stupor, but not yet perfectly in possession of his senses. "Ah! where is she? I had her in my arms—she was mine—it was so beautiful. Thus let me die! Serena!" exclaimed he, still more passionately, "where art thou? My bride, wilt thou let the world separate us? The world—men—what are they to us? We stand now in the choir of the temple of God, and the angels sing over us the highest benediction. Whither art thou fled? Oh, thou hast taken my heart away with thee! Now is my bosom so empty! Serena, come back! Give me life again, Serena!"

"Oh, that is dreadful! dreadful!" whispered Serena, but embraced more closely the support whose support she was. Bruno had now raised himself. He now saw Serena and the rest; and with a vehemence which, whether it were the remains of the confusion of his senses, or proceeded from his own fiery nature, which would now burst through every obstacle to its goal, I know not; but he exclaimed, "Ah! I see, I see how it is. You would conceal her; you would separate her from me! But why would you do this? Wherefore would you separate two hearts which have been already united from their childhood? Do it not. Rather make this a day of blessing. Oh! give me to-day Serena as my bride."

"This is not the proper moment to speak of such matters," interrupted the old man, half angry, half in emotion; "another time."

"And why not now?" interposed Bruno, more vehemently, intensely, irresistibly. "Why not this evening make my life tolerable? Why not already, to-day, bind me to you by everlasting gratitude? Oh, to-day, to-day, give me Serena! I will not take your darling from you—let my house be yours; let me partake with her the care of your old age. Dear mother," he continued, while he seized Madame Dahl's hand, and bathed it with his tears, "good, venerable mother, fear nothing for your child; and as you have experienced that the affection, truth, and reverence of a husband make the felicity of a wife, give me to-day Serena!"

The two old people looked at each other and at Serena. She stood between them, white as the roses in her garland, with downcast eyes, evidently desiring to kneel and offer herself—but at which altar? That was the question.

A pause ensued; and now arose *Ma chère mère*, pale, solemn, but not proud, and thus spoke: "Every one acts best in his own affairs, and therefore I ought, perhaps, to abstain from interference in this; but, as the mother, I will now say one word for my son. I have till now done very little to make him happy, and it is very little that I can yet do, since"—*Ma chère mère* laid her hand on her eyes, while she obviously contended with her emotion. She soon began again, with firmer, though with a softer tone, "I

speak not to persuade you, my honoured friends and neighbours; I will only tell you this, that my son has, of late, made me rich amends for that in which he offended me in his youth. It is my belief, my persuasion, that he, moreover, will do honour to his country, that he deserves the best of wives, and that, in every respect, he will make her happy. My son has long made me the confidant of his affection, and has received my approbation and blessing thereon. So, my dear friends and neighbours, I will merely say that, if you see good to give your granddaughter to my son, it is my opinion that you will act wisely and well. And, for the happiness that you will thus bestow upon my son, shall I, his mother, to my latest days, be thankful to the Lord, and, next to the Lord, to you."

Ma chère mère's words are never without their effect; and in this moment, as she stood, blind and beseeching—for this expression lay in her unusually soft tone—in this moment her words made a deeper impression than ever. Another circumstance must also have operated on the old Dahls. Serena had, although involuntarily, given a public evidence of her love for Bruno. It was perfectly evident to them that the embrace which united them would, on the following day, be circulated through the city and the whole country abroad. Bruno had withdrawn himself a step or two; he seized the hand of his mother and conveyed it to his lips. The old Dahls took that of Serena, and said, "Wilt thou, wishest thou to be his, Serena? Wilt thou to-day—now—give him thy hand?"

"Yes!" whispered Serena's lips. "Oh, my parents—if you are willing—if you allow it—yes!"

"Now, then, in God's name," exclaimed the old man, "Bruno Mansfeld, receive the hand of your bride!"

"Serena mine!" cried Bruno, with a voice that went through heart and soul, and sprang to her. The old people yet held her back. "Take her, then, make her happy!" said they, with a voice which trembled with emotion. "She is our youngest, dearest child—the joy of our old age; she never acted contrary to our wishes." Tears fell on their withered cheeks, and their trembling hands held Serena yet fast. "Remove her not from us: let her close our eyes; be worthy of her—love her—make her happy!"

"Happy!" exclaimed Bruno, as he took her almost forcibly from her parents, and clasped her to his bosom; "happy! as sure as I hope, through her, for God's mercy." Bruno led Serena to his mother, and said, "Bless us, my dear mother." *Ma chère mère* had nearly forgot her wonted stately solemnity, and, with a voice broken with emotion, blessed her children. Hereupon Bruno clasped her in his arms, and for some seconds let his head rest on her bosom. It was beautiful to see them thus stand. Afterward, *Ma chère mère* and the old Dahls gave each other their hands, and some cordial words were on both sides spoken. "And now to the announcement," exclaimed the old man, who seemed to desire to dissipate his feelings. "To-day must all joys be common. Come, my wife! come, my dear children! Listen, there, good friends, relatives, listen! My friends," cried the old man, with a cheerful voice, "I have now to announce to you a betrothal; and to beg your good wishes for my granddaughter, Serena, and her bridegroom, Bruno Mansfeld!" It was as if another chandelier had fallen. Never, prob-

ably, were the inhabitants of the good city of W—, within the space of one hour, so overwhelmed with astonishment. This moment, a declaration of love and a death-blow; the next, resurrection and betrothal!

A loud murmur of amazement and congratulation went through the multitude. But I beheld that not all countenances were congratulatory. I saw long and dissatisfied faces; and I believe that Bruno perceived it too, for his dark eyes flashed, for a moment, like two lightning flashes, scrutinizingly through the assembly; the thunderbolt on his forehead stood sharp; the eyebrows drew threateningly together; and he changed colour. *Ma chère mère* stood forward, and intended, I fancy, to make a speech; but I felt the necessity of sparing this to Serena and Bruno, and on that account sprang out and exclaimed, bluntly, "Now, God be praised! now I see the prospect of another Golden Marriage; and I hope, in fifty years, to be able to wish you, Bruno and Serena, heartily as much happiness as now!"

My forwardness had a good effect. *Ma chère mère* let fall her idea, and so many congratulations came crowding in between that she never took it up again. In the mean time, I stole out. I had said, "God be praised!" but yet, false soul, I did not think so. I felt excited, frightened, and filled with gloomy forebodings. I sought Bear; he sought me; and we met. "What ails thee?" said he, and looked at me with terror. "Ah! Bear, I am uneasy, unwell, ill. Now, indeed, they are betrothed! Ah! don't make such horrible faces! It is not a laughing matter!"

"I don't laugh at that, but at—"

"At me; very likely! It were better that you gave a remedy for palpitation of the heart. Bear! they are betrothed! She, the good, the angelically pure; and he, the—Ah! it cannot be well! They will not be happy. What will be the end of it? Bruno is certainly not worthy of her! He is only half human; and will he ever become wholly so?"

Without giving me any reply, Bear led me into that cabinet in which Bruno had now received Serena's hand. He sat himself gravely down; tore a leaf out of his pocket-book; took his pencil, and I asked, "Wilt thou write a poem? Then it is certainly the death of me!"

"I am writing a prescription for thee," added he, with the same plegm.

He wrote out and gave me these words to read, "Men, who do not believe the Word, are, by the society of women, saved without the Word."

"Bear!" said I, as I embraced him, "thou art the best and wisest doctor in the world!"

"It is never so far between mountains but that hearts meet each other," cried *Ma chère mère*, at the door. "Listen, my children! you have not yet wished me joy, and yet I fancy that it would repay the trouble. I have now gained another amiable daughter; I am a happy mother; sit down with me, and let us talk of the future couple."

We did so. *Ma chère mère* drove, with her plans, far into the future; and the pictures which she saw were distinct. It appeared to be with her as with many who are blind: as the vision of the body is darkened, that of the mind becomes so much the clearer and more cheerful. There we sat pleasantly together till supper. This was served on various little tables in three rooms. At the table where the patriarchs sat

were also Bruno and Serena, *Ma chère mère*, Lagman Høk, the clergyman, Bear, I, and some others. We were tolerably still during the greater part of the meal, and I began to fancy that this feast would pass over without *Ma chère mère* having made a speech in honour of it. But, after the turkey, Lagman Høk raised his glass, and begged permission to drink a *skål*. All were attentive; and, with a low voice, and a mild but confident gaze fixed on the patriarchs, he thus spoke: "Lyres and flowers were woven into the mat on which our honoured friends this evening heard the words of blessing pronounced over them. They are the symbols of harmony and felicity, and these are the Penates of the house. That they surround you, venerable friends! in this festive hour, we cannot regard as a mere accident. I seemed to understand their mute language, and as if I heard them say to you, 'We are here at home. You have, during your union, so welcomed and cherished us, that we can never more forsake you. Your age shall be like your youth!'"

The beautiful toast was hailed with universal joy, and drunk to the touched and smiling patriarchs. "Now! hear that Høk there!" said *Ma chère mère*; and, as if struck with an electrical shock, she jogged my arm, saying, "Fill my glass!" pushed back her chair with a great noise, coughed, and spoke as follows: "Love is more than bow and spear. Love pierces through the shield and mail. Love finds out, unerringly, the way. It brought the first human pair together; it will also bring together the last. For genuine love is not German, French, or Swedish; it is not, indeed, of the earth, it is heavenly; and offers us here the hand, in order to conduct us to the great marriage yonder above. The man and wife, who here are united in true love, and in true love walk together, will there sit beside each other. And well may I, to-day, say, with the mother of King Lemuel, 'Ah! thou son of my life, to whom a virtuous wife is given, she is far more noble than the most precious pearls; she will make sweet to thee all the days of thy life.' My eyes are become dark, but my heart becomes light in my son's future, and, on that account, rejoices with great joy, as I now drink *skål* to my son and his betrothed, and, at the same time, *skål* to his future parents, my valued friends and neighbours."

Bruno generally looks fidgety when his mother commences a speech; but now this feeling was expelled by another, and he regarded her with a look so full of love as I had never yet seen him.

"What will Bear say?" thought I, as *Ma chère mère* had drunk *skål*: "now it is his turn; and he is really no orator." To my great consternation, he said, "Now it is my wife's turn; I will drink the concluding *skål*." "Horrible Bear!" thought I, quite confounded; I collected myself, however, and said, "Love is unchangeable; a *skål* for the oldest and the youngest pair in the company." "Bravo, Franziska!" cried *Ma chère mère*. Now followed the *skåls* so thick and fast on each other, that I kept no account of them. I longed that the turn might come to Bear; but it never came, for now drew near the company from the other tables and rooms, one after the other, with filled Champagne glasses, and speeches were made, *skåls* drunk, and some truly beautiful occasional verses sung, which gave the old Dahls great pleasure; and, with all this, Bear and the concluding *skål* were forgotten. The whole com-

pany rose from the table with a general thunder of hurrahs! I did not omit to upbraid Bear with his shabby escape from the toast; but he protested that he really had prepared a very long and very poetical speech, which he wished especially to retain till the end, that he might put to the *skål*-drinking, as it were, its crown; and that he lamented sorely that the company, and pre-eminently himself, had suffered the loss of it. I begged him, at least, to favour me with the beginning of it; but he replied that he was no friend to beginnings without endings, and that the time would not now admit of the latter, and that I did not seem sufficiently to hold his oratory in honour to listen worthily to it, and so on.

Immediately after supper, the English dance commenced. It was most lively, and no one danced so actively and lightly as Miss Hellevi Hausgiebel. With the English dance, according to Serena's prudent arrangement, the festivities were at an end exactly at midnight; for she feared a later hour would too much fatigue her grand-parents. The long ceremony of expressing thanks and taking leave was exhausting enough, although it was enlivened by much cordiality. In the very moment when the hall swarmed with people like an anthill—ladies who were wrapping themselves in their cloaks, gentlemen who were nunting their *galoches*—*Ma chère mère* fell on one of her merry whims. Already muffled in her "*Januarius*," and her wolf-skin shoes, she asked for a violin; and played vigorously an animated *Polska*.^{*} Everybody was startled; but, in the next instant, came a sort of dance madness over them all. They danced in cloaks and great-coats; they sprang hither and thither, across and around; it was all laughter and merriment. They danced in the hall, they danced on the steps; they had much ado to leave off dancing in the very street.

During the general rush and chaos of joy, I stole forth to see where Bruno and Serena, for they were not among the rest. I went from room to room; and, in one of the most remote, where the tumult of the dancing came but as a soft murmur, I beheld two figures, a dark and a light one. The dark one was Bruno; he knelt before the light one, Serena; and she stooped towards him, and said, softly, "Thou."

"Thou!" a beautiful word! I seemed for the first time to understand its full harmony, and I hastened to say it immediately to Bear; and so well had I hit the tone and expression of Serena, that he instantly understood me, and said also to me, "Thou!"

Ma chère mère had played the last couple out, and now called for me loudly. Exactly as I entered the lobby, which was full of people, my eye fell again on the same dark figure, with the same gloomily-flaming eyes, which had terrified me on entering the house, but again drew back; and as, in sudden zeal, I determined to follow it, to make certain that my suspicions were right, I was stopped by Bear, who is as careful of me as the Israelites were of the Ark, and does not wish me to fall into the hands of the Philistines. With an "Ah!" in my heart, I followed *Ma chère mère* into the carriage. Yet burned the lights and flamed the cressets along the streets. *Ma chère mère* could discern their glimmer, and was in high spirits, and talkative. Many a pithy proverb issued from her mouth in honour of this remarkable day. She concluded a long speech in praise of the old Dahls with these three: "It is

not so easy to leap into God's kingdom." "He that will gather roses must not be afraid of the thorns." "He that sows virtue reaps a good name."

CHAPTER XXIII.

W—, February 8th.

YESTERDAY there was a great ball at the town house, which the city gave in honour of its patri-archs. "Thou must go to it," said I to Bear. "I must not go to it," he replied; "I mean to stay at home, and dance a *pas-de-deux* with my wife." I made, at first, some objections, but was obliged to yield; and, in the joy of our hearts, we actually danced a minuet, to which I sang, and Bear hummed the bass. I then sat down to work on my little prophets—you already know what this name signifies; Bear opened his conversation-box, which always rejoices me greatly, and, out of his copious treasures of the experience of life and men, he brought forth many a precious sample. I have written down some of his relations, and will send them to thee another time. It is a great happiness, Maria, when, in a good husband, one also possesses a piece of good company. At the Dahls, the wedding is already talked of; Bruno drives on with his love and his arrant wilfulness—he must pardon the expression. It is already determined that it shall take place in May, and that my good friend Mauea shall take Serena's place with the old Dahls. Serena will divide herself between Ramm and her grand-parents. She is the most amiable bride, and, at the same time, the good friend, and the same excellent daughter, as before. She is still the same shy woman that she was before the betrothal, and will probably, as a wife, continue equally so; yet her behaviour to Bruno is so fascinating that it compels him almost to worship her. What else shall I say of Bruno? He is good, and not good; happy, and not happy; day and night, sunshine and storm-clouds, continually alternate in him. He appears to me to be like a man who feels that he does not deserve his happiness, and, therefore, is partly at strife with himself, and in part fears that his happiness will be plucked from him. May I be incorrect in my opinion.

To-day he came into Serena's room, as I was there; but she was absent. He said a few words to me, but soon appeared to forget that I was in the room. He looked at Serena's books, her paintings, her sewing apparatus, with a kind of painful tenderness; he looked around the room, and said softly, as to himself, "Innocence! purity! peace!" He took a little light-green silk handkerchief which Serena often wears, kissed it, and hid his face in it; he then rose hastily, and went out. I looked at the little shawl; it was wet with tears. "Peace!" said Bruno, and sighed so deeply, so painfully. Ah! peace he has not. He cannot be absent from Serena; but in her company he cannot find peace. He comes and goes continually, three times a day. He manifests a love for her whose vehemence he moderates only for her sake; he heaps presents upon her, which she accepts only for his; but his disquiet obviously grieves her. "What the d—! is this for a riving and driving! I don't see the use of it," muttered Bear, just now, on this subject. "It is far better to sit quietly and eat one's sweet groats, is it not?" said I, as I set a dish of steaming groats on our supper-table. "Yes, when one's own little sweetest of wives eats with one."

^{*} A popular Swedish dance, full of wild activity.

I was quite satisfied with the politeness, though I breathed somewhat of a great-warmth. But even this warmth must be cherished and esteemed; without it the myrtle-tree of wedlock does not flourish in the North here.

February 12th.

A horrible event has occurred at the Dahls'. A night is since then passed, yet my hand still trembles so that I cannot guide my pen with steadiness. Ah! my forebodings.

Last evening Bear and I were with our friends. Bear sat with the old people; Serena and Bruno were in the next room. I also was there. I sat at the piano, and played some sacred pieces which I had recently received. By degrees I played lower, and made longer pauses; for I caught words which riveted my whole attention. Bruno had been this evening in an unusually gloomy mood, and I heard Serena, who sat by him, ask him what was the cause of it, with those sweet, affectionate words, which woman's love dictates; and he answered,

"I had last night a wretched dream, the memory of which still oppresses me."

"A dream?"

"Yes, a dream. Shall I relate it to thee?"

"Yes, certainly."

"Well, then, Serena, I dreamed that thou wert my wife. Thou wert my own, the companion of my life, the half of myself, and I—was not happy. Years had flown over; thou wert mine; I loved thee, as now, and, if possible, still more. We had enjoyed quiet days; we had already often beheld the sun set and the stars rise over the Helga Sea; in the shade of night, I had enclosed thee in my arms, I had reposed on thy bosom, but I—was not happy. I dreamed that it was again evening. The stars arose one after the other, and mirrored their quiet beams in the quiet waves; the heaven was clear, and the wood lay still and brooding. Thou wert my wife; thou wert in my arms; but I had not peace. There was in my heart a dull pain, as of festering wounds—for the soul, Serena, can have such wounds—but of this thou knowest nothing; and, to still the agony, I pressed thee to my heart, but it was only the more torturing. I seem to feel it yet—lay thy hand here, Serena!"

Bruno was silent for a moment, and then proceeded. "There was a change. I found myself alone in the park at Ramm. I chased a stag, and my hounds pursued him with open, blood-thirsty mouths. I also was thirsty; I seemed to thirst for blood. Over hill and dale, through wood and meadow, drove furiously the chase. It was a wild hunt. From glen to glen, from thicket to thicket, I pursued the flying stag. Hours flew by; the stag sped on—I followed—the dogs howled in incessant eagerness; it seemed as if the chase never would come to an end. The hounds grew weary; I wearied not; my horse tired, but I spurred him forward; a demon chased me, and I chased the stag, and ever more burning grew my thirst.

"For a moment the chase ceased; I had lost sight of the stag; but, as I emerged from a thicket, I suddenly saw him stooping at a brook to drink. He was not far from me, but thirst and weariness overcame fear; he stood still and drank. I shot him down. The report of the gun gave new life to my dogs; they sprang forward, seized the legs of the stag, and entangled his antlers in the bushes. I flung myself from my horse, and flew to give my victim his death-stroke. Al-ready I held my knife at his throat, when he

turned on me his beautiful, dying eyes, full of tears, and gazed on me with a sorrowful and reproachful look. I felt, as it were, a dagger thrust in my heart; and, dumb and gloomy, I looked into those eyes, which, every moment, became more human. At length—oh, horrible! I saw that those eyes were thy eyes, Serena—it was thou whom I had murdered. It was thou, it was thou, who thus gazed on me! Almighty God! if ever thy look—"

"Bruno! Bruno!" Serena tenderly, and much excited, exclaimed, "why talk in this manner? It was but a dream; and a truly hateful and irrational dream. Look at me, Bruno; no, turn not thine eyes away; look at me, and see that never, never can such a gaze from my eyes fall on thee. Ah! that thou didst but truly know, truly feel, how impossible it is! Hear, Bruno! I have also a dream to relate, and a dream of truer augury than thine. I dreamed, Bruno, that the world was frozen, frozen to ice. There was no more sun, no greenness on the earth, no blue in heaven; in their stead was black and empty space. Magnificent palaces, woods, and mountains, stood yet, but were converted into ice. Strange and fearful lights, whose origin men did not see, and which diffused no warmth, but, on the contrary, threw long and hideous shadows, wandered about among the ice-forms. All life was destroyed, two human creatures excepted, who yet breathed with warm and beating hearts in this marble world; and these two, Bruno, were thou and I. Solitarily we glided through long colonnades of ice: we touched not the earth, but yet were not in a condition to raise ourselves above it. Our future was to be—slowly to freeze, the last of all living creatures.

"Thy heart was bitter, my friend, and thy cheek was pale. As the lights came, and threw menacing shadows against thee, thy arm was stretched out as to do battle with them, and thy voice raised wild reverberations. But, in the midst of this congealed world, in the midst of this night of horrors and of death, I felt a warmth in my heart which no ice, and no time appeared able to extinguish. There was, as it were, a springing fountain of life in it, which diffused itself through my whole being, and endowed me with a higher strength than I had possessed in the sunny, vernal days of the earth. I loved thee more intensely than ever, Bruno! It was to me a genuine joy, with thee and for thee to suffer; and, as thy heart became quiet and warm on mine, and thy cheek less pale, then I felt an assurance that it was given to me to offer my life for thine, and with the warmth of my heart to defend thee against the cold and horror-shapes of darkness. I felt myself in this thought so happy, so perfectly happy, that I awoke. My dream was at an end, but clearly did I feel what I had experienced in my vision! and I have felt it often, and still feel, that I could bear a great pain for thee, because I could then make thee better understand how sincerely I love thee."

"Oh God!" said Bruno, with a soft voice, but with an expression of agonized pain, "oh God! how little do I deserve a love like this; how unworthy—Serena, thou sweetest angel! thou who shalt be my wife—"

"Never shall she be it!" cried a wild, piercing voice; and Hagar, more like a fury than a woman, darted into the room. A dagger flashed in her hand; in the next instant it seemed sheathed in Serena's heart. But, with the speed of lightning, Bruno had seized Hagar's arm; the blow

was turned aside, and the dagger only wounded Serena's shoulder. With the gesture of a madman, Bruno wrenched the murderous weapon from Hagar's hand, pushed her fiercely back, seized with one hand her hair, and the steel glittered above her breast. "Wretch!" he exclaimed, with a hollow voice and white lips, "curse of my life—die!"

"Bruno! oh, my God!" cried Serena, as she sprang forward and hung on his arm. Bruno moderated his fury, his wild look became more composed, his lips murmured, "A woman!" and the dagger fell from his hand. He looked at Serena, saw her blood flow, caught her in distraction in his arms, and bore her to a sofa.

"Thy will shall be done!" cried Hagar, wildly. "See here, Bruno, thy victim; it would only die at thy feet!" She ran to him, plunged the dagger into her own breast, and fell before him, drenched in her blood. "Bruno, for thee! for thee!" muttered her lips; then were silent, and her eyes closed.

It was the work of a moment. It was horrible, but still more horrible what followed. Bruno's despair was mute and gloomy. The old Dahl tore his gray hair, and cried, "My child! my child!" Bear only retained his self-possession; he alone restored order and reflection. "It is but a scratch; there is—fetch me the hangman! no more danger for her than for me," said he to the grandparents, as he addressed himself to bind up her wound. Serena, however, pushed back his hand, and, pointing to Hagar, who lay there motionless, cried, "Help her! help her! she needs it more than I." But Bear would not leave her till she was bandaged, and then he begged me to conduct her, with her grand-parents, to another room.

Hagar, who was supposed to be dead, soon, however, showed signs of life, was laid on a bed, and committed to the care of Bear. With the greatest presence of mind, Serena ordered everything which was necessary for her accommodation, and appeared to forget that she herself had suffered. She sought with the tenderest words to quiet the old people, and stopped their mouths with kisses, when they attempted to cast reproaches on Bruno. "We really know nothing yet," said she, interrupting them beseechingly: "we cannot, we must not yet judge. Let us wait; Bruno will explain all; all may yet be well." On this, she went to Bruno, who stood there sunk in a gloomy revery, and said, "Go back this evening to Ramm, Bruno, and come again to-morrow. Then we shall be all more composed. Go, my dear friend, now; but return in the morning, and then, if thou canst, satisfy my parents, and us all."

"Serena! and thou? and thou?" said he, and stared at her agonizedly. Serena turned away her face to hide the suffering, the expression of which she strove in vain to subdue. "I believe in thee," said she, softly: "good-night, Bruno;" and she covered her eyes with one hand, while she extended to him the other.

"Thou turnest away from me; thou wilt not look at me," said Bruno, with gloomy complaint. Then turned Serena her countenance towards him; she would have smiled at him, but her eyes stood full of tears. Perhaps Bruno saw in this gaze what he had seen in his dream, for he became like one wild; he uttered a curse upon himself; struck himself with his fist on the forehead, and rushed out.

Bear and I did not this night return home. He sat by Hagar, who had fallen into a violent

delirium of fever, and now uttered words of love and now of raving, but which were alike wild, and bore the impression of an unregulated and despairing soul. I stayed with Serena, whose chamber lies next to that of her grand-parents, and tried to persuade her to go to bed, and to endeavour to get some sleep. She consented to my request, and made as if she slept, but I often heard her silently weeping. I was frequently obliged to go to Hagar's chamber to bring her news of her state. Bear does not think her wound mortal. Ever and anon, too, the door of the old people's chamber was softly opened, and anxious questions concerning the beloved child were whispered, and received ever consolatory answers. Bear was with all, growled good-naturedly at all, comforted all, and gave them all some composing-drops. Threetimes in the night came Bruno, yet would not go in, but asked and received from Bear news of the condition of Serena and Hagar, upon which he went off again, as if driven by the Furies.

It was a long and painful night. Serena inquired often, "Is it not nearly morning? Does it not dawn?" Ah! she yearned for morning, because she believed that light and Bruno would come together. The morning came, but Bruno did not; but merely a note from him, containing these wild and disconnected lines: "I should return; I should explain; so thou entreatedst me. Oh! that a wish of thine should from me remain unfulfilled! Serena! I cannot explain; I cannot come! Her I will not see, and thee I cannot; thy look consumes me; I can now give no explanation. Honour commands, but honour also forbids. Hagar can, but will not. Farewell, adored, and to-be-compassionated-one, since thou lovest me. I cannot come; but I will surround thee invisibly, and not in wretchedness. Was it not the punishment of the outcast to behold Paradise, but to see it closed against them with flaming swords? Retribution, dreadful retribution! Pray for me, Serena, for hell is in my heart!"

After the perusal of these lines, Serena leaned her head upon her hand, and sat long thus, as it were lost to the world; but she must certainly have prayed to the eternal Comforter; she must certainly have lifted her heart to the Father of love, or otherwise her countenance, as she again raised her head, could not, amid so much anguish, have worn so high and gentle an expression of self-denial. Her first step was to her aged parents; the first words which her lips after this blow uttered were in petition to these to have patience, not to be too hasty in judging, but to await the moment when this mystery should clear itself up, and Bruno should stand before them in a better light. She communicated to them his letter, was skilful enough to turn its expression to his advantage, gave a hint at the probable solution of the mystery, and achieved what she sought. The old people became more composed, and left to her to manage these affairs. How beautiful is such a confidence between parents and children!

I left Serena at breakfast, which, with her usual solicitude, she prepared for the old people, while she assured them that she felt no pain from her wound, and that she should speedily be quite well again. I went home to seek rest; I was fatigued, but yet more uneasy and excited than fatigued. In order to quiet myself, I have written to thee, my Maria, because to impart our troubles to a friend is for the heart the best of opi-

—*atlas*. I feel already its beneficial operation, and will now endeavour to sleep.

Bear and Serena have resolved that Hagar shall remain at the Dahls' till she either dies or gets better; she could not yet, without great danger, be moved. For the rest, the horrible affair will be kept as still as possible, and especially will they endeavour to prevent its reaching the ears of *Ma chère mère*. Ah! how will all this unfold itself? I will tell thee more when I know it.

CHAPTER XXIV.

TO THE READER, FROM A STRANGER LADY.

BUT Madame Werner knows merely the surface of the following *dénouement*. Chance made me acquainted with its interior existence, and I now proceed to lift the veil from certain scenes which at this time took place in Hagar's sick chamber. They may be compared to those outline profiles which one makes of the faces of our friends, on a winter's evening, by candle light. If the connoisseur of art and of human nature be of opinion that these sketches are far too hasty and too little finished to deserve a closer attention, but yet possess too many features of truth to be cast aside, I shall be quite satisfied; and begin quietly

SCENE THE FIRST.

"Jealousy knocked at the door of my heart,
And cried, 'Kill! kill!'"

In a hushed room, which looked into a garden, lay the sick and guilty Hagar, nursed as if she had been a beloved child of the house. A few days had passed, and Hagar lay now in delirium, now in consciousness. Doctor Werner sat at her bedside, regarding with astonishment the conflict of passions which had never disturbed his own peaceful soul. Besides him, and a maid which waited on her, Hagar saw no one; an invisible genius watched faithfully over her. The embrocations which refreshed her burning forehead, the draughts which stilled the pain of her wound, were handed to her by Serena.

One evening she lay in a restless slumber. Serena was alone with her, and stole quietly forward to contemplate her for a moment. "God be praised!" whispered her lips; "God be praised! thou sleepest, poor and to-be-pitied one! Thou hast destroyed my happiness; but oh, how much happier art thou!"

Hagar awoke. Serena drew herself hastily back, but she had been observed. "Who is there?" she cried, sharply. Serena was silent, in the hope that she should not be recognised; but Hagar continued: "Thou dost not answer, but I know thee. I have seen thee before creeping about my bed, pale maiden, in order to suck my blood. Do not imagine that thou canst deceive me. I know that I am in thy power, and I know what thou wilt do; thou wilt torment me, and take away my life with poison. In punishment of my crime, I shall perish by degrees through privation of fresh air. And on that account thou hast taken him away from me, that I may never more see him, never more hear his voice; for these were my pleasure and my life. He himself has delivered me into thy power. Yes, he and all hate me, and rejoice in my misery; but I will deceive him, and all of you; I will free myself."

While Hagar said this, she sought for the

bandage, in order to tear it from her wound; but Serena flew forward, seized her hands, and held them back with an almost supernatural power. Hagar stared wildly on that gentle countenance, which was bathed with the tears of grief and pity, and said, "Will you preserve my life, in order to suffer me to perish the more slowly?"

"Oh no! no! Hagar! Mistrust me not; I wish you to live."

"I do not believe it. Thou lovest him that I love, that belongs to me—I tremble, I faint—who belongs to me, for I had his promise before thou. My claims on him are older, holier—blood has sealed them. Ha! thou wished me well! Thou! Away! I know what jealousy is; this black, black plague, which leads to murder—to madness—which in solitary hours whispers, with a clear, ghastly voice, 'Kill! kill!' Ha! white maiden! now becomest thou also black, and hatest—hu! all around me is black, black, black—"

Hagar swooned. Serena called in her attendant, and hastened, beside herself with grief, to her own chamber. There she threw herself on her knees, and cried, "Oh, my God! he could thus deceive me!" All was dark around her now, but not long.

SCENE THE SECOND.

"Love is patient and mild."

Hagar. So you really do not desire my death?

Serena. No, Hagar. May you live and acquire peace.

Hagar. But, if I live, I shall disturb your peace. If I live, you will never be happy.

Serena (*with quiet despondency*). I have already abandoned this hope.

Hagar. His beloved you might have become; you would then be what I, and many others, have been; but his wife—never! never! Sarah drives Hagar out of the house. Will you be his beloved?

Serena (*quietly*). No, Hagar!

Hagar. You are too proud to become that?

Serena was silent.

Hagar. You do not love him! you will sacrifice nothing for him!

Serena. Ah, yes! my life, my earthly happiness—how willingly!

Hagar. That is little. But do you know what I have sacrificed for him? Wealth, station, honour, fatherland, parents, happiness—all! all! In my father's house, I could command a thousand slaves. I forsook all, and became his slave; and on that account he must love me—on that account he must become mine. Who stood by his side, in the bloody fight, to the death? Who dared with him to scorn the law of damnation, if not I? White maiden! white and cold as the snow on the mountains of thy fatherland! dost thou think that thou canst tear him from me? No! to me will he come back; my fire streams also in his veins. Feeble one! fear his kiss; it consumes. Fly him! for he is mine here, and beyond the grave. Oh, my wound! God, what an agony! Help! help!

Serena hastened to her. With the soothing ointment, which Dr. Werner had prepared, she dressed the wound, and bound it up with a gentle and skilful hand.

"Thanks!" said Hagar, in a milder tone; "thanks! thou art kind."

"Oh, Hagar! love him, but do not hate me."

"No; I hate thee no longer. Who can hate thee?"

SCENE THE THIRD.

"If any one compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain."

Hagar (passionately). If you wish me to live, see that he comes back. It were better to lie on the rack and enjoy the sight of his countenance, than be in paradise without him. They tell me that you have much power over him; use it, then, to make him come back, and, if possible, to forgive me. Jealousy made me wild; but his hate I do not deserve; at least, not—Hagar was silent, and sunk in thought. For some days she had been better; Serena's indefatigable care and gentleness operated like a healing balm on the unhappy one.

Later in the evening, Serena sat by Hagar, and wrote. Love and sorrow hovered on her lips, which lightly moved, as if she whispered the words into the pen; but on her lovely brow lay a loftier tranquillity than usual—it was like the victorious repose of virtue and love. Hagar observed it; and, in her bold and bitter manner, she said, abruptly, "You are, certainly, much satisfied with yourself." Serena blushed, and Hagar proceeded: "You value yourself greatly, no doubt, on being so pure and virtuous. You certainly believe that you stand much higher than such a wretched creature as I am."

"No, in truth not," answered Serena, with a tear in her eye.

"You would, indeed, be wrong if you did," continued she; "for very dissimilar are our endowments, and still more so our temptations."

"That is true," answered Serena, humbly.

"What, indeed, has he to boast of, who has never been tempted? If you had been tried, you would, probably, have been no better than many others."

Serena was silent.

"Happy are they whose bosoms are never shaken with passions, whose blood runs softly, whose earliest companions are virtue and peace. If they continue unspotted—if they fall not—small is their merit."

"You are right," said Serena, still and humbly as before. She propped her head on her white hand.

"Fate determines, and the world judges; and both alike blindly," continued she, in her bitterness; "and, therefore, the path of one man is called victory and honour; that of another, fall and reprobation."

"But God, who sees in secret," said Serena, with a firmer voice, "God, who is more mighty than fate and the world, will one day make equal what here was unequal. Then, Hagar, will it often happen, that he who laboured only in the last hour will receive a reward equal to his who was called in the first hour."

Hagar raised herself somewhat, and regarded Serena with amazement. "What God lives in thy soul?" demanded she; "and wherefore such gentle words to the hated and the outcast?"

"Not hated, not outcast!" said Serena, as she drew nearer to the sick-bed. "Oh no! Hagar! a milder judge assuredly awaits thee."

With an expression of higher wonder, Hagar fixed her broad and questioning gaze on that sweet countenance, which was now near her bed, and looked down on her with an angel's compassion. Serena continued: "Jealousy has led you to a dark deed, but your love is true and great. I have listened to you, Hagar, as your soul revealed its inmost feelings. I have listened, in the hours of twilight and of night, when you be-

lieved yourself alone, and I have learned how you love—no sordid soul, no ordinary woman, can love thus! Passions, circumstances, the darkness in your soul, have led you astray; but in clearer moments, and now, Hagar, descend into your heart, and ask yourself whether there be anything which you would not sacrifice for Bruno's happiness; whether there be a suffering which you would not willingly bear for his sake? Is not your love for him your strongest, yes, is it not now the only, deep feeling of your heart?"

"Yes," exclaimed Hagar: "I have loved him burningly, inexpressibly—love him yet, but—this love has conducted me to crime!"

"And if you had pierced my heart, Hagar, and I now lay dying near you, I would still say that the work of the moment will not condemn the heart which loves steadfastly."

Hagar gasped for breath. A refreshing feeling descended into her desperate heart, and quenched its bitter burning. With folded hands, she sank back on her couch. "Yes," whispered she, faintly, "thou art right! Ah, there is thus one who can understand me, who can believe my words. Hear me, then, Serena, thou who hast an angel's gentleness and an angel's serenity in thy soul! hear me! I wished not to kill thee! No, I would not do Bruno such an injury. As I sat in the dark wood alone, and jealousy called up thoughts of murder in my soul, I cast them from me in abhorrence. As I heard of Bruno's betrothal; as I saw that my fate was irrevocably sealed, I determined to kill myself; and, that I might acquire strength to do it, I would see him with thee, with thee, his betrothed bride. Ah! as I saw thee for the first time, it went like cold steel through my heart; then I felt that he would love thee differently from what he had loved others. I felt that he was lost forever to me; and yet I had his first love, his first promise. But to the matter. I came one evening, and saw you together; but as I saw thy head leaned on his shoulder, as I heard him call thee his wife, then a fury rent my heart and my brain. It was jealousy. My soul was wild, and my dagger thirsted for thy blood, before it should cool itself in my own. Yes, it was the work of a moment—a dark, dark moment! but now a beam of heaven pierces through the veil of night. But thou! thou whom I would have killed, and who yet givest me life, say, who art thou, wonderful maiden? Art thou a child of heaven, sent down to bring comfort to the earth, and who hast nothing in common with its passions and pains? Or belongest thou to those forms of witchcraft of which I have heard tell, who with silver voices and fascinating sounds allure men, and suddenly change themselves into shapes of hell, and drag down the unhappy ones into eternal darkness?"

Hagar's wild and heated fancy seemed, in this moment, to be ready to realize to her this horrible metamorphosis. With a disturbed look, she gazed on Serena, who calmly said, "I am only a weak woman, to whom, however, God has given the grace to triumph over the passions and agonies of the heart. Read, Hagar: these lines will speedily bring him thou lovest back to thee; and no longer mistrust me." Serena gave Hagar the letter which she had just written, and she read:

"Thou fleest me, Bruno; thou avoidest our house. Bruno, return. I ask it not only in my own name, and on my own behalf: I ask it on behalf of a person who can more readily dis-

peace with light and life than with thy presence. Come, Bruno, come to this most-to-be-compasionated one. By her couch I await thee. Let us together recall her to life, or together bestow consolation on her last hours. Let us be together, Bruno, my friend! In the darkness which at this moment surrounds me, I yet know one thing with clearness, and that is, that I love thee, and that nothing in the world can pluck this feeling out of my heart. We can determine nothing at this moment in regard to our future relations; well, then, let us leave these to time, and have peace with one another; and should an obstacle to our union as man and wife arise, that need not be an obstacle to our being friends. Hagar has spoken of claims which she has on thee; of earlier bonds, which bind thee to her. If she has spoken the truth, Bruno, yet is my prayer still the same—Come back, Bruno, to me and to her!

"Listen, Bruno! let us become children once more. Let us be as we were in the days, the beautiful days, when we hailed together the morning sun in the woods of Ramm, and when the shades of evening still found us together, full of peace and watchfulness for each other. Dost thou remember an evening when it became dark in the wood, and I asked thee, 'Art thou not afraid to lose thy way in the dark?' and thou answeredst me, 'With thee the way is clear to me;' and I said again, 'And with thee I am never afraid in the dark.' Oh, friend of my childhood! can it not be as it was then? Life is the wood, and that can be dark—oh! I have experienced it for some time—let us, then, go together in the dark path, Bruno; extend me thy hand, as friend, as brother; then will the way, perhaps, for us both, yet become clear. Listen to my entreaty—I make it with tears. Return, Bruno; dear, ever dear friend, return. Thine, SERENA."

With a trembling hand Hagar gave back the letter. "Thou lovest him better than I," she said. A bitter expression passed over her countenance, and she drew the clothes over her head.

Serena despatched the letter, and a few hours afterward Bruno was at her feet. They spoke not, but involuntarily embraced each other; and their hearts were involuntarily melted together in one unutterable feeling. From this moment Bruno has been frequently at Hagar's bedside; and the wild and bold woman is, in his presence, a meek and humble one, whom a mere look commands. Bruno's forgiveness and presence, Serena's kindness and tenderness, her true and gentle nursing, have operated beneficially on her condition. Dr. Werner has hopes of her life. Franziska comes sometimes in the evening to visit her friend. Between Bruno and these two accomplished and amiable women have arisen conversations of a high and noble interest, which Hagar has drunk in with eagerness. The old Dahls, also, have come and joined them; and in the chamber, in the very circle, where so much material existed for all that is most unhappy in life, have grown by degrees, through Serena's influence, peace, interest, yes, even pleasure, at least for the moment; and the circumstance itself, which threatened inevitably to rend asunder the bonds of confidence and love, has served only to entwine them the stronger. Beautiful power of goodness, which desires alone to reconcile; of wisdom, which, like God's own wisdom, opposes only to all division and scattering a higher harmony, a profounder order and love!

What effect these conversations and their dai-

ly association with Serena produced, we shall presently see.

SCENE THE FOURTH.

"Drop by drop the still rain pierces
Deep through the hard rock's hardest heart."

SCHILLER.

The storm raged without. One of those evenings was closing in, in which the legends of past ages, of the wild exploits of witches, seem almost to verify themselves; in which the poor wanderer in the North frequently loses his way. His wife, or an aged mother, misses him by the evening fire; but on the next day it is related that he was found dead on the snow in the wood.

Hagar's state had suffered a fresh change. Her strength, which for some time had gone on increasing, and therefore gave hopes of her recovery, suddenly abated, and was followed by a condition of increasing weakness. "It is not her wound only, but her mind," said Dr. Werner, "which preys on her life." It was now silent in the sick chamber; Serena alone moved about in it, with quiet solicitude for the body and soul of the invalid. These, also, were more composed since she had surrendered herself wholly to her faithful and gentle nurse.

The icy shower struck against the window of the sick chamber, and the tempest tossed the branches of the trees which stood without; but within burned a lamp, still and clear, and a feminine voice read these words: "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son; make me as one of thy hired servants. And he arose, and came to his father. But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him."

"Blessed, blessed words!" here cried a faint voice from the bed. "And if I should go home, like the prodigal son, should I, indeed, be thus received? Great, great is my guilt."

"But the mercy of God is yet greater," answered Serena. "The prodigal son had actually wasted his whole inheritance, but, when he returned repentant, he was received at last."

"Well, then!" said the invalid, with a burning heart, "I also will return. To my earthly father I cannot return; he would only receive me with curses; but I will arise and go to my Heavenly Father."

SCENE THE FIFTH.

"Love takes no heed of boundary-line;
It knows no measure, knows no grave."

It was night, and the moon shone radiantly. The earth lay deluged in its beams, so friendly and so still. The snow-covering was gone, and a wind of resurrection awoke the slumbering to the life of spring. We will follow the beams of heaven's lamp into Hagar's sick-room, and observe the forms which there were illuminated by them.

They fall strongly upon a profile which has been beautiful. The features now are sharp and harsh, such as passion and pain are wont to carve out with their keen chisel. The eye which was wont to roll wildly is now quieter. There is a sainted expression in the wasted countenance, and the hands are as if placed in prayer. Hagar sits upright in bed.

Near, and supporting her, stands a young maiden. Perhaps it is the light of the moon which occasions her to look so snow-white, as she stands there like a lily bathed in sunbeams.

Perhaps, also, it may be suffering which has chased the ruddy colour from her cheeks; yet it had not been able to steal thence the tranquil glance of her expression, nor to change the delicate, and almost childlike roundness of her figure. She is soft—soft as goodness itself, and as captivating. Her look is clear, mild—one might almost say holy. "Lean more freely on me," said she, softly, to Hagar. "It is Serena!"

In the shadow, and darker than it, stood Bruno, his gloomily-frowning gaze riveted immovably on these two. His breast heaved slowly, but mighty feelings were battling within it. At a distance from the bed, in a tempered and gray twilight, sat two aged forms, still, pale, and resembling apparitions.

Six weeks had fled since the evening on which Hagar had laid a violent hand on her own life; and, like a dying flame, which now blazes up, now sinks again, she had long hovered between life and death; but the pangs of the last days had been great, and she felt her end drawing near. It was night, as she, awaking out of a protracted state of unconsciousness, desired an interview with Serena's grand-parents; but, when they came, it was long before she was able to speak. Supported on Serena's faithful bosom, and embraced by her arms, she by degrees gathered some strength, and, at her request, the aged pair drew near. In brief, but strong expressions, she thanked them for the kindness they had shown her, and begged their forgiveness for the distress she had occasioned them. "Now," added she, "I will no more distress any one on the earth; I go to meet my last judgment. But, before I go, let me do sacrifice to the truth; let me, in some degree, make restitution for the evil I have done. Hear the confession of a dying woman, and put faith in my last words; I HAVE NOTHING TO CHARGE UPON BRUNO! I have been the shaper of my own fortune. In my father's house we loved one another, and were betrothed. It was I who broke the vow; my excesses and crimes awoke his abhorrence. I would draw him down; he fled from me; I pursued him; and it became my fate, that, although repulsed and despised by him, I was yet compelled to love him; that I could not breathe except in the fire which consumed me. My love was its own punishment; it has bowed down my soul, but has also made it better. Bruno tolerated me near him; endured the storm-wind which raged with never-ceasing commotion. This gave me strength to live—yes, to hope that I might yet regain the heart which I had lost. For this I followed him into this land, in whose earth I shall soon rest. Bruno attached himself to Serena, and insisted on my departure. He offered me rich gifts, and implored me to return to my native country. There was not merely desire, but command in his annihilating words; and I pretended to comply, and took my resolution to perish. My feelings were maddened. Cold was the winter evening on which I determined to put an end to my life. Bruno was with his bride—I was alone in the dark wood—cold was the winter evening, and on that account my blood was stiffened, my hand benumbed, and would not obey me. I determined to see him and her together; I ran, I saw them, jealousy made me furious—and the rest you know. Yet, once more, forgive—yet, once more, hear this word: I have nothing of which to accuse Bruno, but for much to implore his pardon. He deserves your grand-daughter; and in the unknown space into which my spirit

goes, I will bless him and her. If you can forgive me, then extend me your hands, that I may press them to my lips. If you pardon me, tell me that you will not prevent this union, which my crime threatened to dissolve; give to the repentant and the dying this last consolation!"

Hagar was silent. The two old people extended their hands, and spoke to her words of reconciliation; and on this, as Hagar appeared faint, they softly withdrew. Hagar lay for a moment in unconsciousness; but speedily revived, turned her expiring eyes towards Serena, and said, "And now let me thank thee, thou pure, thou clear fountain, which mirrors itself in the heaven of God. For my bitter words thou gavest me kind ones; for the suffering which I occasioned thee, thou hast ameliorated and sweetened my last hour. Thou hast offered refreshing liquids to my lips; thou hast poured the oil of compassion into my wounded heart; thou hast taught me the holy nature of love; hast effected that gentle feelings now rule in my soul; that yet at the gate of death I can hope! Serena, Bruno, give me your hands! that I, who would have separated them, may now unite them; that I may pronounce a blessing over them, before my lips are silenced forever!"

Serena, silently weeping, extended her hand, but Bruno stood immovable. "He will not!" exclaimed Hagar, with pain; "he fears the blessing which my lips would pronounce; he abhors me, even to death!"

"It is not so, Hagar," said Bruno, mildly, as he laid lightly his hand on her violently labouring breast: "have peace with me, even as I have with thee. Thou hast been dear to me, and in this moment thou art so still."

"Have everlasting thanks for these words!" exclaimed Hagar, vehemently. "Oh! speak them once more! say that thou forgivest me!"

"Who am I, that I should forgive thee?" said Bruno, gloomily. "What right have I to appear better than thou? We have both erred; both stand before the Eternal eye alike in need of pardon and mercy."

"No, not alike!" asserted Hagar. "Was it not I who conducted thy fiery, inconsiderate youth to deeds wherein thy heart had no participation? Was it not I who, like a serpent, wound myself about thy tree of life, and infused poison with its sap? Thou it was who awoke in me a human spark: that which bound me to thee was neither thy beauty nor thy bravery; it was the flame of a higher life, which again and again flashed forth from the tempestuous night of thy existence. In vain would men burn thy strength to ashes; like the Phoenix, thou arose from the pyre, shook the ashes from thy pinions, and soared towards the light. So didst thou fly before me, and I remained in the dust; but now—it is so dark! Now I die with pleasure, since I know that my death is good for thee; yet hear this one prayer. In the park at Ramm is a grotto; there I have often rested—it is cool and still; let me there be buried. And here—my coffin stands in thy house; it has imbibed the atmosphere of thy house, where thou breathest—lay me in that. Ah! thy hand does me good; let it there rest till that heart is still. Farewell, Bruno! I sink into the dark, still night—and with me the past! Mayest thou be happy with thy young bride! with me all is—at an end!"

Hagar was silent. Her hands dropped from those of Bruno, her bosom became still, and the great apparition of life—Death—spread over her

features the veil which no mortal can raise. She had ceased to breathe. The beams of the moon grew dim, and the dawn of Easter-morning spread its uncertain light through the chamber, and its ruddy glimmer hovered over the pale corpse. A solemn stillness prevailed long around her.

"Dead!" at length exclaimed Bruno, with a hollow voice, as he stooped over Hagar, and was visibly shaken with agonized feelings—"dead—because she loved me! Who ever became happy in loving me? To whom did I ever give joy? I have darkened the life of my mother—here lies the betrothed of my youth; and ye, unhappy victims, whose existence I have blighted, you also rise up to accuse me! It is just! Ye pale shapes, come and place yourselves between me and her who should be my wife—for I am not worthy of her. I will not deceive her—I will not steal into her heart with a lie; no, no one shall love me, no one follow me, except this spirit of evil which accompanies me through life. I believed that Serena would drive him forth. Ah! this angel-look oppresses me, and plunges me still deeper—thy usurped heaven would become my curse! No, I will fly—fly—I will—" A convulsive agitation shook Bruno, and the fixed eye showed that he was no longer master of himself.

"Bruno! Bruno!" cried Serena, with tenderness and pain, as she approached him. "Away!" said he, sternly and wildly. "Away! my love brings misfortune with it. Come not with thy pinions too near the flame of the burning gulf. Fly! fly!"

"Bruno," said Serena, while, spite of his menacing gestures, she drew near, and threw her arm around his neck, "talk not so wildly. Be gentle—be still. Thou art unwell, Bruno; come, compose thyself. Sit down here by me; lean on me, my Bruno. I am still thy Serena—thy bride—who loves thee so tenderly; who will follow thee through joy and trouble."

The tension of Bruno's spirit gave way; his look became gentler; he breathed more softly. "Speak, angel-voice, speak!" said he.

"Thou hast watched too much; thou hast exhausted thyself," continued Serena, tenderly and caressingly: "now thou must take a little repose. I will watch thee while thou sleepest; and then we will go out together, and behold the sun—the delicious vernal sun, which gives joy and life to all creation. It will be a lovely day, my Bruno!"

Serena's child-like, sweet words, and the testimony of her love, laid the demon in Bruno's soul. He calmed himself, and appeared to awake out of a painful dream. With a look of inexpressible affection and inexpressible anguish, he gazed on Serena. "Oh!" said he, with tearful eyes, "never did the harp of David more soothingly charm the frantic spirit to rest. But, Serena, tell me, what have I said? what have I done? and tell me, also, what thou hast thought of it?"

"Thou wert ill, Bruno; but, thank God! thou art now better, and all is well."

"No! with me all is not well, Serena; for know, that the phrensy of which thou hast been a witness is no strange guest with me. In the activity of the day—in the silence of the night—it surprises me, till I can again rise into mastery over it. Seest thou, in the moment in which my mother laid the curse upon my head, my spirit received a wound, which, since then, has never healed. Wild deeds and memories have prevented it. Oh, long have I yearned to lay myself at thy feet with my terrible secret! but

my strength has failed me—strength, perhaps, forever—but now is the hour come! Turn thy pure gaze away, Serena!"

Bruno described, in rapid, but graphic words, his first aberrations. "My brother's manly kindness," said he, "snatched me from the dangerous and destructive path. For a moment I thought to begin a new and better life; perhaps should have done it, had not the consequences of my first digressions dragged me down. I was early become a secret gambler. I had seduced into the same course a young man of my acquaintance—I was the cause of his misfortunes; and, in order to rescue him, I had recourse anew to forbidden means. My theft was discovered—discovered by my mother! She would punish me severely—perhaps, too severely; but no, I deserved it. But I would not submit myself; I met force with force; I opposed my mother—and she cursed me!"

At these words Bruno's voice trembled; he paused an instant, and then proceeded.

"I fled the same night, my heart possessed with Furies, which have since then never quitted me. I went into foreign service, and earned wounds and honour. When the war was ended, I fell into connexions which fettered my heart, and confounded the remaining ideas of right and goodness which I had brought with me from the maternal home. Loaded with the curse of my mother, and bearing in my bosom a storm of unbridled passions, I sought to gratify these; I sought to forget that I had a home, a mother, a native land; to forget that I was cursed—ah! that was an icy feeling in my heart, which drove me continually deeper into the fire of perdition. The men with whom I was now surrounded, the desire of gain, the very danger with which the enterprise was attended, drove me to that which I shall ever repent—I became a dealer in men, a trader in human souls! I tore the children of Africa from their huts; I tore with violence husband from wife, mothers from their children, and carried them as slaves to the Portuguese colonies. Men—my brethren—I sold for gain! They, who then exerted a powerful influence over my mind, had represented to me these unhappy people as destitute of all moral worth—yes, as actually ranking below the beasts. A terrible circumstance opened my blinded eyes—let me now pass it over in silence, I could not relate it with equanimity. Enough—from that moment I abandoned my bloody trade. Again I changed my name and country.

"To forget and to enjoy were now, more than ever, the impelling objects of my life. At the faro-table I wooed Fortune, and she was auspicious. One evening I won a heavy sum from a very young man. Gold glistened around me, and blinded my eyes; but the ashy ghastliness of desperation, which overspread the countenance of my opponent, as he left the room, recalled me to reflection. Perhaps he had a mother, who— I hastened out after him. I would give him back all that he had lost. I ran up the pitch-dark street, and called the name of the unfortunate youth. A flash and a report were the answer to my call; fragments of the brain of the unhappy man flew to my very feet. He was the only son of a destitute widow!

"I abandoned the faro-table; I sought to repair, in some degree, the evils which I had perpetrated; I sought to ameliorate the burdens of those classes of men against whom I had transgressed. But what is the benevolence of the gam-

bler? It is like the alms of the robber—it is a blood-penny! No atonement can thence arise to the heart. I felt it. I sought love. Love, I imagined, would enable me to forget the past, and enjoy the present. I plunged into love, and sank into the arms of—no, holy love, not into thy arms—but in those of voluptuousness was my life consumed. I persuaded myself that I loved—I was deceived. I deceived others, and revelled in excess after excess. But as the waves fled the lip of Tantalus, so fled peace and enjoyment from me. During fifteen years, I had probably moments of wild pleasure, but not one hour to which I would say, 'Remain!' not a day to which I would address the petition, 'Come again!' An inexpressible emptiness, which nothing appeared capable of filling—a consuming thirst after something, I know not what—reigned in my soul. At times, in more tranquil hours—yes, even in those of the wildest enjoyment—came before my spirit an image whose fascinating, and yet agonizing effect on my heart, it is impossible for me to describe. All that my years of childhood had possessed of innocent and beautiful—all that I had at times dreamed of heaven and its peace—appeared to blend themselves into one shape; and that shape, Serena, wore thy features. Thence arose in my soul an ineffable longing and despair.

"Once more I tore myself from my effeminate and dissolute career. I sought to employ my life, which oppressed me, in a widely extended and systematic activity. I launched into speculations of commerce; they prospered, and I became rich. But, ah! my heart still remained poor; and, in the midst of my superfluity, my soul hungered. It was at this period that my affairs conducted me to England. I heard Canning address the representatives of a great people for the abolition of the slave-trade, for liberty, and the good of mankind. I saw on his brow the glory of an immortal beauty; and, for the first time, I comprehended the moral worth and the true nobility of man, and the baseness of my former life. Oh, Serena! then did I bewail the days and the vigour which I had wasted! But I was still young; yet could I begin—what? An outcast, a son with the maternal imprecation on his head, what good can he commence? what blessing can he receive from above? I was cursed! That was the brand which was stamped on my forehead; the stone which lay upon my life, and doomed it to eternal darkness. What angel could roll the stone away? Oh, long did my soul wrestle in benumbing despair! for my mother is the only being whom I ever feared. Often since my childhood had our spirits contended; but she had always triumphed, had always cast mine down. Bitterness grew in my heart; but long years passed away, and love came back into it, and grew and overspread all the bitterness. The thoughts of reconciliation with her were the only thoughts in my soul. This reconciliation was the condition of a new, of a better life; without it, the whole world was nothing to me. I had no hope; but, if I would live, I must dare. So powerfully had this feeling laid hold on my being, that I was physically enfeebled by it; at the very word 'Mother' I could weep like a child.

"I came back; I saw my paternal home again; I saw also thee, Serena! the paradise of my childhood, my revelation of heaven, the object of my desire, the reformation of my life and being—I saw all this in thee. Wonder not that my arms *extended themselves* longingly to secure thee;

wonder not, that, when I saw myself an outcast from the maternal bosom, I sought to win an angel for my distempered soul. There hovered at this moment a doom over me, on which depended more than mere life and death; the consequence must be reconciliation, or the eternal perdition of my soul. There lay a thunder-cloud on my heart and brain; I neither saw nor felt clearly. It was then that I tempted thee, Serena; thou withstoodest me, and I believed that I loved thee less; but I deceived myself; thou hadst sunk only deeper into my spirit, and wert become one with its good genius. But this I did not then feel; my mind was dark.

"A moment of wild desperation passed over, and I became reconciled to thy mother. I rested my head on her bosom! I heard her bless me! Almighty God! rich in mercy, wouldst thou weigh out to me against this moment a hundred years of suffering, yet could I lift my hands to thee, as now, and thank thee for this moment! Words cannot express its value; it has saved me both in time and in eternity.

"What shall I say farther to thee, Serena? Although reconciled with my mother, and loving her more intensely than ever, I felt, after the first moments of heavenly blessedness, no rest in my heart. Thee, thee, must I win. Thou must become my wife, if I must enjoy peace on earth. I sought to win thee in the way which thou thyself hadst pointed out to me—I was rejected. It was not wounded pride, Serena, which induced me for a long time to absent myself from your house; no, but I descended into myself, and endeavoured to renounce thee. It was in vain! a nameless, irresistible Power drew me back to thee; there was a bond between us, which seemed to me to be twined by God himself. Thou wert mine! Oh, moment of transport! of godlike blessedness! Thou wert mine—and life was renovated, the past was forgotten, all was atoned for and purified. Oh, it was but for a moment! the Furies speedily raised themselves again in my heart, the chastening goddess of Memory; and thy acquiescence, thy pure glance, became to me piercing reproaches. I was not worthy of thee: every day made me more sensible of it; and doubly unworthy I felt myself, that I would draw thee down into a life of whose darkness thou wert ignorant; for in vain would I delude myself—never can I be at rest; never can the blessedness of a pure heart dwell in my bosom. What has been done cannot be undone; there are circumstances in my life which never can be forgotten; remembrances which will pursue me to the grave! Oh, Serena! thy innocent hand should not be laid in one stained with so many crimes; thou, the pure, the blessed, shouldst not stand in connexion with him on whom secretly lies the ban of expulsion from civil society; at least, thou oughtest not to surrender thy youth, thy beauty, thy womanly virtue, to a deceiver. This has of late become perfectly clear to me. It has become clear that, if I abused thy confidence, and made thee unhappy—and happy never can the partner of my days and nights be—then, indeed, must I become an eternal reprobate. These thoughts have long agitated me. Hagar's crimes and thy virtues, thy conquest over me and her, have brought them to maturity. I love thee now, Serena, as highly and sacredly as I before loved thee wildly and egotistically, and, therefore, I have unveiled my soul before thee, as before its eternal Creator. The altar has not yet united us; thou canst yet separate thyself from me, canst yet withdraw thyself.

Thou art at this moment free; and, if thou rejectest me, yet shall no complaint, no reproach, pass my lips. If thou, also, turnest thyself away from me, I will yet love and honour thee, and will go on my solitary and dreary path as well as I may.

"Thou hast spoken of friendship, of brother and sister; pardon me, if I rend away this illusion of an angelically pure heart. It cannot be so between us. God created our souls of far different natures; in mine burn flames of which thou knowest nothing; I must possess thee, or fly thee; but, if I fly thee, Serena, I shall yet carry thy image in my bosom, and it will make me a better man. I am not alone—I have a mother. I will live for her, should it even be without pleasure or enjoyment. Yet let me add but one word. I have hoped, Serena, thou, whom I alone have ever truly loved—to be able to begin, on thy bosom, on thy angel's heart, a new and better life. I believed that the better germs in my soul would unfold themselves under thy protection—and who can say what the heart augurs? and who measures the strength of love? Who sets bounds to the mercy of the Almighty? With thee appeared the way to atonement and a better life—without thee—but I have said enough. Now thou knowest all, Serena—pronounce the judgment over me. I stoop my head before thee, and will kiss thy beloved hand, let it dispense me what it will—life or death."

As the Seraph Eloa, says the poet of the Messiah,* descended at the side of the Saviour into hell, and saw there the darkness and misery, its clear glance became quenched in gloom. A feeling, like that of Eloa, had, during Bruno's confession, oppressed Serena; and an indescribable weight lay upon her heart, and impeded its action; but it was rolled away, and vanished. As the fresh wind blows away the fog; as the clear stars come forth in the dark night; as the glow of morning ascends, and illumines and fills all creation with splendour—so rose in Serena's heart the eternal love, strong, abundant, sweet, and triumphant. In her soul all became lighter, freer, more assured than ever—there was no more fear, no more disquiet there; and, as Bruno ceased to speak, she stooped towards him, with silent tears of affection in her eyes, and said, "I go with thee, Bruno. Oh! my friend, my husband, it cannot be otherwise. Together let us wander on the earth, together one day kneel before the throne of the All-merciful!"

Speechless, Bruno clasped her to his bosom. Light broke in. A song arose, beautiful and peaceful, and embraced the united ones in its melodious waves. It was the Easter Hymn, sounding from the church for the celebration of the First-born of the Resurrection.

These scenes are at an end; and, with them, my task. With hearty good-will I surrender again the pen to the hand of Madame Werner; but just at this time, namely, after Hagar's death, occurs a material gap in her correspondence; the positive cause of which it is not in my power to state, and which I am not enabled to fill up. Thou must, therefore, worthy reader, content thyself with proceeding to the next chapter.

CHAPTER XXV.

Rosenwik, May 23d.

Here again! I sit alone, and have despatched

* Klopstock.

Bear to Ramm, there to look well about him, and, in the first place, to take his own pleasure, and then to confer on me that of hearing how affairs stand after the wedding: I do not find myself very well. I am heavy and dull; look towards Ramm, and long for Bear. Evening draws on; he must certainly soon appear. I have not been well since Serena's wedding-day; I was too much excited. Bruno's disquiet on this day, his nearly wild questions to Serena, "Wilt thou become mine in joy and sorrow, in time and in eternity?" what do they portend? "I will answer thee this evening," said Serena, in her sweet, sincere manner. "That pacified him; and at evening, as they were affianced, and the blessing was pronounced over them, he became changed. A great thoughtfulness appeared to exalt and to calm his spirit. Ah! wherefore this disquietude, wherefore this pain in the bosom of happiness itself, if his conscience had peace?"

But am I not wrong to feel such uneasiness and anxiety, when I have witnessed in Bruno so much and genuine love; and in Serena, a tenderness, a truth, and a strength, which can ennoble and embellish everything? In the marriage hour there was something in her which seemed to elevate her union above all the power of misfortune and mutability. There lay a heavenly serenity on her pure brow. She pronounced the words "To love thee in joy and trouble" with such a beautiful and lofty certainty, that I involuntarily pronounced them again to Bear, as I leaned on his shoulder, and stood there supported by his faithful arm. How the occurrences of this day still hover before my mind! They seized powerfully, too powerfully, upon me! How long Bear stays! The shadows of the trees are already large, and the birds begin their even-song. God grant that no misfortune has happened at Ramm! the old black house there looks like a place of ill luck. Why must Serena go there? Thank God! here comes Bear. I will go down towards the bridge to meet him.

24th.

FRAGMENT OF A CONVERSATION OF YESTERDAY.

"Well, Bear, it was beautiful, what thou saidst of Serena: that she looked so amiable, and the patriarchs so satisfied. Tell me, now, how was *Ma chère mère*?"

"Superb, but not lively."

"Did she make no speech?"

"No: she was unusually still, but appeared satisfied, and internally thankful."

"And how behaved Bruno towards her?"

"Like the tenderest of sons."

"And towards Serena? What did he call her? Did he look much at her? How much did he look at her? Was he much about her? Did he talk much with her? Did he show much attention to her, much solicitude about her?"

"My dear child, it would be quite as well if thou hadst a less *flux de bouche*, then one might answer regularly. Now let us see, what was the question? Whether Bruno behaved to his wife as became a husband."

"Ah! thou art unbearable! Did he lie at her feet?"

"Not exactly. That would not have been quite appropriate in so great a company; but there seemed, on the whole, to exist a good understanding between them."

"A good understanding! Thou talkest quite pitifully. Perhaps thou wilt think that I ought to thank God that they don't quarrel!"

"That thou canst not do, for they do quarrel!"

"Good gracious. And about what?"

"Heaven knows what was the occasion; but he said, 'My sweet Serena, my wife, it shall be as thou wilt!' and she answered, 'No, Bruno, it shall be as thou hast said; it is best so.'"

"Well, thank God! How thou canst frighten one! And how did Bruno look as he said, 'My wife?'"

"How!—like a husband."

"Who adored his wife?"

"Why, yes; and who feels that he possesses, in her, life's greatest good."

"See! now thou speakest beautifully, my Bear! And then the dinner, Bear? Tell me now a little about the dinner. Describe me all the dishes, in succession. Thou dost not remember them? Oh! it is wretched of thee! Yes, certainly thou rememberest some. Let us see, the first course, for instance, which always relishes the best, what did that consist of?"

"I believe—of chickens."

"Chickens! impossible. Serena cannot have chickens for the first course; she must then have ham to the roast-meat." Bear laughed at my zeal, and, after some other unfortunate attempts to come at a notion of the dinner, I was compelled to give it up, and to tell Bear that he was an unworthy guest, and that I would tell Serena of it. In order to divert my attention and propitiate me, he conjured up, I know not how, a bottle of Bishop, and a basket of splendid preserved fruits, which he had brought from Ramm; compelled, as he said, against his will, by Serena.

I was quite enchanted with this little entertainment, fetched glasses, and we sat down to drink healths. We drank the health of the young couple, the health of *Ma chère mère*, our own, and that of the little unknown. We got quite into a zealous mood with our health-drinking. We then seated ourselves at the window; it was a lovely evening, and the heaven lay clear over Ramm. A gleam from the setting sun illuminated the dark wood; and I recollected that I had once before seen this, and had thought on Serena. I saw the shore, before so dusky, now brightly lit up. I looked at Bear, who did not turn his full-moon face away from me; a warmth glanced about my heart, tears came into my eyes, and I said, pointing towards Ramm, "It is more clear there, Bear; now there are happy hearts there."

"No happier than here," said Bear, as he drew me tenderly to him, and held me fast on his knee. The sunshine slowly died away; the shore was again shrouded in gloom; and, with a sigh, I added, "Ah! who knows how long they will continue happy there? God knows whether Bruno, this unquiet spirit, can be at peace!" A melodious tremour passed through the air, and appeared to answer to my sigh. I was startled, and we listened at the open window. The organ at Ramm was pealing, but not as formerly; tones like those of Handel's Messiah issued from it. I leaned my head against Bear's, and thus we sat in the warm May evening, and listened. And till late in the evening the organ sounded even more beautifully, more peacefully, as it seemed to me; and I called to mind the last words of the Legend of the Neck: "Then the Neck wept no more, but took his harp, and played and sung sweetly till deep in the night, for he now knew that he should be saved."

25th.—Jane Maria was here yesterday; she was gay and joyous. I learned various matters from her; and, among them, some which de-

lighted me. *Ma chère mère* grows ever more quiet and gentle, goes often to church, and her proverbs become ever more biblical. Her heart seems now, more than formerly, to desire to make men happy. She gives much to the poor; among the rest, old linen; and through that prepares, according to the lively expression of a young and amiable lady, "her heavenly purple." Jane Maria related a scene between Elsa and *Ma chère mère*, which gave me pleasure. *Ma chère mère* had to-day knocked down and broken a couple of china cups which stood on a table. She was put out of humour by it. She will sometimes, in little matters, act too much the person who can see; and in the heat of the moment lets fall, "The Hangman!" and similar expressions of anger on Elsa, for having put them in the wrong place. *Ma chère mère* was wrong; but Elsa, who formerly always protested with strong words against any injustice of the kind, now let it pass very quietly for her own fault. A moment afterward, as *Ma chère mère* sat binding her net, and let her needle fall under the sofa, Elsa—who is always at hand when she can be of service—went down on her knees to pick it up, and gave it to her again. *Ma chère mère*, on this, laid her arm gently round her faithful servant, and said, with emotion, "My dear Elsa, what should I do if I had not thee!" Elsa embraced the knees of her mistress, pressed her forehead against them, and a tear of tenderness and joy quietly rolled down her bony cheek.

Jean Jacques regulates and commands freely at Carlsfors; abolishes all abuses; and makes many useful arrangements. He is an active and highly-informed man; and talks less, since he has done more. He and Jane Maria extend their influence continually at Carlsfors, while *Ma chère mère* seems more and more to withdraw herself from the affairs of the world. Music gives her more pleasure than ever; and she has once said that she could wish to die amid the sound of Bruno's organ. The next week she is going to give the new-married pair a great dinner. Miss Hellevi Hausgiebel will also give, in honour of them, a select *soirée*.

It is said that Nature and Art propose to make a union in the persons of young Robert Stalmark and Adèle Von P. They have made the discovery of each other's excellences at Miss Hausgiebel's *soirées*, in the course of the winter; have fallen, consequently, in love, and are become thereby much more amiable.

Lagman Håk has, during the spring, suffered much from his liver complaint; has been obliged to confine himself long to his room, where he has been diligently visited by his neighbours and friends. *Ma chère mère* has been twice a week to see him; and I, too, have now and then passed an hour with the still and interesting old man. Yesterday, Jane Maria informed me he had been again, for the first time, to Carlsfors. *Ma chère mère* and he walked their *trall* together, she holding by a line which was stretched across the room.

We hear that Cousin Stellan will travel this summer into Italy, on account of his health; in truth, in order to dissipate his *ennui*; but I fear that this will go along with him.

Peter and Ebba are expected in the autumn. It will be a pleasure to see them again, and I shall be anxious to observe how the sisters-in-law will now agree. Jane Maria expects visits from some Stockholm acquaintances, and promises herself a gay summer.

But, while all around me rejoice themselves—love, dance, and prepare entertainments—I go, perhaps with hasty strides, towards my last home; but I think no longer of it with uneasiness; I have arranged all my little affairs, and hold myself in readiness for what may come. I have written a letter for Bear, which, if I die, shall tell him how dear he is to me, and how happy he has made me during our short union. My poor, good Bear! He is now so uneasy, so anxious about me, that it internally troubles me. I see that he will never do for my doctor; I must now have courage for us both. I will follow the example of a young friend who found herself in a similar situation to mine, and, what was worse, in a solitary house in the country, and hemmed in by snow-drifts; but, that she might keep herself in spirits, she translated some of the finest scenes of Shakspeare. I have no Shakspeare at hand, but I will set on and write an epistle to those who are more the subject of my thoughts.

TO MY DAUGHTERS.

Above all things, my dear daughters, bear in mind that you are human beings. Be good, be true; the rest will follow. As much as possible, be kind to every one, tender to every animal. Be without sentimentality and affectation. Affectation is a miserable art, my daughters; despise it, as truly as you would acquire moral worth. Do not regard yourselves as very important, let you have as many talents and endowments as you may; consider nature and life, and be humble. Should you be treated by nature like a hard stepmother, and be infirm, ordinary, or the like, do not be discouraged; you may draw near to the Most High. Require not much from other people, especially from one another. The art to sink in the esteem of yourselves and others is, to make great demands and give little.

If you are straitened in this world, look up to Heaven; but not as turkey-cocks, but as believing children. Should one of you fall, let her immediately determine to arise again; to the failing, as well as to the unfortunate, there is

always extended a helping hand. Lay hold on this.

Ah! my daughters! . . .

Fourteen days later.

What is become of my daughters? They have turned themselves into a son; and the young gentleman was uncourteous enough to interrupt the letter to his sisters. There he lies, in the new wicker-cradle, under the green taffety canopy, well grown, round, and fat; and the great Bear is on his knees beside his little Bear. I have a great mind to join him in his idolatry; but Bear, the father, considers it more fitting that the son wait on his mother. I am proud of my little boy, but so it is; I had so certainly calculated on a little maiden that I almost miss it. But, as *Ma chère mère* comforted me, "Deferring prevents no recurring."

"What shall I do with my letter, Bear? It is not adapted to the honourable gentleman there."

"I will take care of it for our girls; write another for the youngster."

Happy, my Maria, is the wife who can, like me, give to her son, from heart and soul, this exhortation: "Resemble thy father!"

"No, Bear, thou mayest not see what I have written. Thou mayest not take my paper away, tyrant! I promise to conclude very soon, but I must yet add a word or two."

These good people and neighbours, from all sides, they have sent me flowers, and jellies, and all sorts of good things. Serena has nursed me the whole time, like a sister. She is quiet, kind, sympathizing—in one word, like herself; and seems to entertain a love for Bruno which is too inward to express itself in words. My Maria, I invite you to stand godmother to my little Bear. He is to be called Lars Peter, and *Ma chère mère* will herself convey him to the font. She was here the day after his birth, and laid a beautiful present on his cradle. She spoke with me about my fears and troubles on this head, and said, "Well, it is in these things as in life, 'All is well that ends well.'"

"No, Bear! my paper—my pen—oh, thou abominable Bear!"

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NEW-YORK: HARPER & BROTHERS, 82 CLIFF-STREET.

THE HOME:

OR,

FAMILY CARES AND FAMILY JOYS.

BY FREDERIKA BREMER.

AUTHOR OF "THE NEIGHBOURS."

TRANSLATED FROM THE SWEDISH,

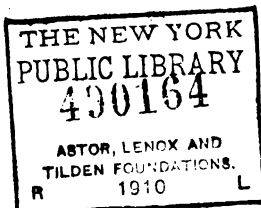
BY MARY HOWITT.

NEW-YORK:

PUBLISHED BY HARPER & BROTHERS, 83 CLIFF-ST.

1844.

92.



P R E F A C E .

THE speedy appearance of this volume after "The Neighbours," is a sufficient proof of the success of that work. Indeed, the evidences of this success have been too unequivocal to have escaped any one; and perhaps it would be difficult to decide which has been most gratified by it, the author or the translator. The most kind and cordial, I may say, the most *neighbourly* manner in which "The Neighbours" have been received, both by the press and the English public, has not only gone with a grateful delight to my heart, as an evidence that whatever is sound and good, come whence it may, will be heartily welcomed by my own proud and noble country, but has flown on rapid wings to the North, and given a charming surprise to the excellent authoress. Before the copy which I had requested my publishers to forward to her had reached Stockholm, Miss Bremer had received various letters from her countrymen in London congratulating her and themselves on having seen "The Neighbours" receive such handsome "neighbour's fare" in the literary circles there.

No feeling is so dear to the heart of an author, who is conscious of writing for the improvement as well as the pleasure of his fellow-men, as to find the sphere of his usefulness suddenly, and as it were by miracle, immeasurably widened. To learn, therefore, at once that she was not only read and beloved in England, but that within a month after its appearance in London, "The Neighbours" was reprinted in the great United States newspaper, "The New World," and diffused all over that vast country, and read in the wildest regions of the back woods, while a good edition was rapidly passing through the American press, we may believe was no indifferent intelligence. Indeed, the high estimation in which the literature of England is held in the North, makes it a proud circumstance to any one to be introduced into it, and warmly welcomed there. Miss Bremer, in a letter to me, says with her usual modesty, on this subject, "England har en så rik, så utbildad roman litteratur, och mina skrifter äro så ojemna, så fulla af brister, att jag knappt förstår huru—the fastidious, refined society of England—kan smälta dessa nordiska ra-ämnena!" England possesses a romance literature so rich, so fully developed, and my writings are so unequal, and full of faults, that I can hardly understand how the fastidious, refined society of England, can digest these rude Northern materials.

But letters from all classes of English society, and from members of the very highest, shew me how enthusiastically these *ra-ämnena* have been welcomed; so that good husbands have, far and

wide, been complimented by their wives with the agreeable name of—Bears.

As "The Neighbours" might be regarded as a salutary picture of new-married life, "The Home," I think, will be found equally charming and useful as a picture of family life during the growth of the children. A sketch of home discipline, in which is seen how, without great worldly fortune, or extraordinary events, a deep interest may gather about a group of individuals, and how faults and failings, and diversity of dispositions, which without the great saving principles would lead to sorrow and disunion, are, by these saving principles, love and good sense, made to work themselves out, and leave behind them a scene of harmony, affection, and moral culture, most charming to contemplate.

I am not intending, any more than the amiable authoress herself, to present these as faultless stories.

We must remember that they are the product of a nation possessing tastes, in some respects, different to ours, yet still, in the main, extremely kindred in feeling as in language. Miss Bremer describes them to me as a people of a highly intellectual spirit, of strong impulses, but somewhat unsteady in following them out. "Vi Svenskar äro ett folk af starka impulser, men ostadigt utförande. Men jag vill ej skylla ifrå mig upå mitt folk! Detta folk har en rik och djupsinnig ande." It will be seen that they, like the Germans, and like our ancestors in the days of the Tudors and Stuarts, are very fond of acting scenes and surprises in family life; a striking instance of which in these volumes, is that where the Franks, on returning from Axelholm, are received by the Father and Jacobi at an inn, in the disguise of landlord and waiter.

It may be as well to state here, that the title of Excellence is the highest one next to the princes of the blood in Sweden. It is, indeed, a sort of order of merit; is confined to twelve persons, who may be otherwise noble or not, and is not hereditary. I must add also with pleasure, that to my valued friend, Madame von Schoultz, who has resided many years in Sweden, I am much indebted for endeavours to bring this translation as near as possible in spirit and meaning to the original.

M. H.

Heidelberg, March 12th, 1843.

P. S. Should errors of the press occur, my absence must plead the excuse: at the issue of the next translation, this inconvenience will no longer exist.

LIFE IN SWEDEN.

THE HOME;

OR,

FAMILY CARES AND FAMILY JOYS.

CHAPTER I.

MORNING DISPUTES AND EVENING CONTENTIONS.

"My dear child," said Judge Frank, in a tone of vexation, "it is not worth while reading aloud to you, if you keep yawning incessantly, and looking about, first to the right and then to the left;" and with these words he laid down a treatise of Jeremy Bentham, which he had been reading, and ran from his seat.

"Ah, forgive me, dear friend," returned his wife, "but really these good things are all so difficult to comprehend, and I was thinking about —. Come here, dear Brigitta!" said Mrs. Eliza Frank, beckoning an old servant to her, to whom she then spoke in an under tone.

Whilst this was going on, the Judge, a handsome strong-built man of probably forty, walked up and down the room, and then suddenly pausing, as if in consideration, before one of the walls, he exclaimed to his wife, who by this time had finished her conversation with the old servant, "See, love, now if we were to have a door open here—and it could very easily be done, for it is only a lath-and-plaster wall—we could then get so conveniently into our bedroom, without first going through the ante-room and the nursery—it would indeed be capital!"

"But then, where could the sofa stand?" answered Elise, with some anxiety.

"The sofa?" returned her husband, "O, the sofa could be wheeled a little aside; there is more than room enough for it."

"But, my best friend," replied she, "there would come a very dangerous draft from the door every one who sat in the corner."

"Ah! always difficulties and impediments!" said the husband. "But cannot you see, yourself, what a great advantage it would be if there were a door here?"

"No, candidly speaking," said she, "I think it is better as it is."

"Yes, that is always the way with ladies," returned he, "they will have nothing touched, nothing done, nothing changed, even to obtain improvement and convenience; everything is good and excellent as it is, till somebody makes the alteration for them, and then they can see at once how much better it is; and then they exclaim, 'Ah, see now, that is charming!' Ladies, without doubt, belong to the stand-still party!"

"And the gentlemen," added she, "belong

to the movement party; at least wherever building and molestation-making comes across them!"

The conversation, which had hitherto appeared perfectly good-humoured, seemed to assume a tone of bitterness from that word "molestation-making;" and in return the voice of the Judge was somewhat austere, as he replied to her taunt against the gentlemen. "Yes," said he, "they are not afraid of a little trouble whenever a great advantage is to be obtained. But — are we to have no breakfast to-day? It is twenty-two minutes after nine! It really is shocking, dear Elise, that you cannot teach your maids punctuality! There is nothing more intolerable than to lose one's time in waiting; nothing more useless; nothing more insupportable; nothing which more easily might be prevented, if people would only resolutely set about it! Life is really too short for one to be able to waste half of it in waiting! Five-and-twenty minutes after nine! and the children—are they not ready too! Dear Elise—"

"I'll go and see after them," said she; and went out quickly.

It was Sunday. The June sun shone into a large cheerful room, and upon a snow-white damask tablecloth, which in soft silken folds was spread over a long table, on which a handsome coffee-service was set out with considerable elegance. The disturbed countenance with which the Judge had approached the breakfast-table, cleared itself instantly as a person, whom young ladies would unquestionably have called "horribly ugly," but whom no reflective physiognomist could have observed without interest, entered the room. This person was tall, extremely thin, and somewhat inclined to the left side; the complexion was dark, and the somewhat noble features wore a melancholy expression, which only seldom gave place to a smile of unusual beauty. The forehead elevated itself, with its deep lines, above the large brown extraordinary eyes, and above this a wood of black-brown hair erected itself, under whose thick stiff curls people said a multitude of ill-humours and paradoxes exerted themselves; so also, indeed, might they in all those deep furrows with which his countenance was lined, not one of which certainly was without its own signification. Still, there was not a sharp angle of that face; there was nothing, either in word or voice, of the Assessor, Jeremiah Maa-

ter, however severe they might seem to be, which at the same time might not conceal an expression of the deepest goodness of heart, and which stamped itself upon his whole being, in the same way as the sap clothes with green foliage the stiff resisting branches of the knotted oak.

"Good day, brother!" exclaimed the Judge, cordially offering him his hand, "how are you?"

"Bad!" answered the melancholy man; "how can it be otherwise! What weather we have! As cold as January! And what people we have in the world too: it is a sin and shame! I am so angry to-day that — Have you read that malicious article against you in the — paper?"

"No, I don't take in that paper; but I have heard speak of the article," said Judge Frank. "It is directed against my writing on the condition of the poor in the province, is it not?"

"Yes; or more properly, no," replied the Assessor; "for what is so extraordinary is, that it contains nothing on that affair. It is against yourself that it is aimed—the lowest insinuations, the coarsest abuse!"

"So I have heard," said the Judge, "and on that very account I do not trouble myself to read it."

"But have you heard also who has written it?" asked the visitor.

"No," returned the other; "nor do I wish to know."

"But you should do so," argued the Assessor; "people ought to know who are their enemies. It is Mr. N. I should like to give the fellow three emetics, that he might know the taste of his own gall!"

"What!" exclaimed Judge Frank, at once interested in the Assessor's news—"N., who lives nearly opposite to us, and who has so lately received from the Cape his child, the poor little motherless girl?"

"The very same!" returned he; "but you must read this piece, if it be only to give a relish to your coffee. See here; I have brought it with me. I have learned that it would be sent to your wife to-day. Yes, indeed, what pretty fellows there are in the world! But where is your wife to-day? Ah! here she comes! Good morning, my Lady Elise. So charming in the early morning; but so pale! Ei, ei, ei; that is not as it should be! What is it that I say and preach continually! Exercise, fresh air—else nothing in the world avails anything! But who listens to one's preaching! No—adieu my friends! Ah! where is my snuff-box! Under the newspapers! The abominable newspapers; they must lay their hands on everything; one can't keep even one's snuff-box in peace for them! Adieu, Mrs. Elise! Adieu, Frank-Nay, see how he sits there and reads coarse abuse of himself, just as if it mattered nothing to him. Now he laughs into the bargain. I hope you'll enjoy your breakfasts, my friends."

"Will you not enjoy it with us?" asked the friendly voice of Mrs. Frank; "we can offer you to-day, quite fresh home-baked bread."

"No, I thank you," said the Assessor; "I am no friend to such home-made things, good for nothing, however much they may be bragged of. Home-baked, home-brewed, home-made; it all sounds very fine, but it's good for nothing."

"Try if to-day it really be good for nothing," urged she. "There, we have now Madame Folette on the table; you must, at least, have a cup of coffee from her."

"What do you mean?" asked the surprised Assessor; "what is it? What horrid Madame is it that is to give me a cup of coffee? I never could bear old women; and if they are coming now to the coffee-table—"

"The round coffee-pot there," said Mrs. Frank, good-humouredly, "is Madame Folette. Could you not bear that?"

"But why call it so?" asked he. "What foolery is it?"

"It is a fancy of the children," returned she. "An honest old woman of this name, whom I once treated to a cup of coffee, exclaimed, at the first sight of her favourite beverage, 'When I see a coffee-pot, it is all the same to me as if I saw an angel from heaven!' The children heard this, and insisted upon it that there was a great resemblance in figure between Madame Folette and this coffee-pot; and so ever since, it has borne her name. The children are very fond of her, because she gives them every morning their coffee."

"What business have children with coffee!" asked the Assessor. "Cannot they be thin enough without drinking coffee; and are they to be burnt up already! There's Petrea, is she not lanky enough? I never was very fond of her; and now, if she is to grow up into a coffee sister, why—"

"But, my best Munter," said Mrs. Frank, "you are not in a good humour to-day."

"Good humour!" replied he: "no, Mrs. Elise, I am not in a good humour. I don't know what there is in the world to people good-humoured. There now, your hair has torn a hole in my coat-lap! Is that pleasant! That's home-made, too! But now I'll go; that is, if your doors—they are home-made, too, are they not!—will let me get out of them."

"But will you not come back and dine with us?" asked she.

"No, I thank you," replied he, "I am in a bad humour elsewhere; and that in this house, too."

"To Mrs. Courtmarshal W——!" asked Mrs. Frank.

"No; indeed!" answered the Assessor: "I cannot bear that woman. She lectures me incessantly. Lectures me! I had a great wish to lecture her! And then, her detestable dog—Pyrrhus or Pirre; I had a great mind to kill him. And then, she is so thin. I cannot bear thin people; least of all, thin old women."

"No!" said Mrs. Frank. "Don't you know, then, what rumour says of you and poor old Miss Rask?"

"That common person!" exclaimed Jeremias. "Well, and what says malice of me and old Miss Rask?"

"That, not many days since," said Mrs. Frank, "you met this old lady on your stairs as she was going up to her own room; and that she was sighing on account of the long flight of stairs and her weak chest. Now malice says, that, with the utmost politeness, you offered her your arm, and conducted her up the stairs with the greatest possible care; nor left her, till she had reached her own door; and further, after all, that you sent her a pound of cough lozenges; and—"

"And do you believe," interrupted the Assessor, "that I did that for her own sake? No, I thank you! I did it that the poor old skeleton might not fall down dead upon my steps. From no other cause in this world did I go crawling up the stairs with her. Yes, yes, that was it! I dine to-day with Miss Bernades. She is a very sensible person; and her little Miss Laura is very pretty. See, here have we now all the herd of children! Your most devoted servant, Sister Louise! So, indeed, little Miss Eva! she is not afraid of the ugly old fellow; she—God bless her! there's some sugar-candy for her! And the little one! it looks just like a little angel. Do I make her cry? Then I must away; for I cannot endure children's crying. It may make a part of the charm of home: that I can believe;—perhaps it is home music. Home-baked, home-made, home-music—hu!"

The Assessor sprang through the door; the Judge laughed; and the little one became silent at the sight of a bretsel,* through which the beautiful eye of her brother Henrik spied at her as through an eyeglass; while the other children came bounding to the breakfast-table.

"Nay, nay, my little angels, keep yourselves a little quiet," said the mother. "Wait a moment, dear Petrea; patience is a virtue. Eva dear, don't behave in that way; you don't see me do so."

Thus gently moralized the mother; while, with the help of her eldest daughter, the little prudent Louise, she cared for them all. The father went from one to another full of delight, patted their little heads, and pulled them gently by the hair.

"I ought, yesterday, to have cut all your hair," said he. "Eva has quite a wig; one can hardly see her face for it. Give your father a kiss, my little girl! I'll look after your wig early to-morrow morning."

"And mine too, and mine too, father!" exclaimed the others.

"Yes, yes," answered the father, "I'll shave every one of you."

All laughed but the little one; which, half frightened, hid its sunny-haired little head on the mother's bosom: the father raised it gently, and kissed, first it, and then the mother.

"Now put sugar in the father's cup," said she to the little one; "look! he holds it to you."

The little one smiled, put sugar in the cup, and Madame Folette began her joyful circuit.

But we will now leave Madame Folette, home-baked bread, the family breakfast, and the morning sun; and sit us down at the evening lamp, by the light of which Elise is writing

TO CECILIA.

I must give you portraits of all my flock of children; who now, having enjoyed their evening meal, are laid to rest upon their soft pillows. Ah! if I had only a really good portrait—I mean a painted one—of my Henrik, my first-born, my summer child, as I call him—because he was born on a Midsummer-day, in the summer hours both of my life and my fortune; but only the pencil of a Correggio could represent those beautiful, kind, blue eyes, those golden locks, that loving mouth, and that all so pure and

* A kind of fine curled cake.

beautiful countenance! Goodness and joyfulness beam out from his whole being; even although his buoyant animal life, which seldom allows his arms or legs to be quiet, often expresses itself in not the most agreeable manner. My eleven-years-old boy is, alas! very—his father says—very unmanageable. Still, notwithstanding all his wildness, he is possessed of a deep and restless fund of sentiment, which makes me often tremble for his future happiness. God defend my darling, my summer child, my only son! Oh, how dear he is to me! Ernst warns me often of too partial an affection for this child; and on that very account I will now pass on from No. 1 to

No. 2.

Behold then the little Louise, our eldest daughter, just turned ten years old; and you will see a grave, fair girl, not handsome, but with a round, sensible face; from which I hope, by degrees, to remove a certain ill-tempered expression. She is uncommonly industrious, and kind towards her younger sisters, although very much disposed to lecture them; nor will she allow any opportunity to pass in which her importance as "eldest sister" is not observed; on which account the little ones give her already the title of "Your Majesty," and "Mrs. Judge." The little Louise appears to me one of those who will always be still and sure; and who, on this account, will go fortunately through the world.

No. 3.

People say that my little nine-years-old Eva is very like her mother. I hope it may be a real resemblance. See, then, a little, soft, round-about figure, which, amid laughter and merriment, rolls hither and thither lightly and nimbly, with an ever-varying physiognomy, which is rather plain than handsome, although lit up by a pair of beautiful dark-blue eyes. Quickly moved to sorrow, quickly excited to joy; good-hearted, flattering, confection-loving, pleased with new and handsome clothes, and with dolls and play; greatly beloved, too, by brother and sisters, as well as by all the servants; the best friend and playfellow, too, of her brother. Such is the little Eva.

No. 4.

Nos. 3 and 4 ought not properly to come together. Poor Leonore had a sickly childhood, and this rather, I believe, than nature, has given to her an unsteady and violent temper, and has unhappily sown the seeds of envy towards her more fortunate sisters. She is not deficient in deep feeling, but the understanding is sluggish, and it is extremely difficult for her to learn anything. All this promises no pleasure; rather the very opposite. The expression of her mouth, even in the uncomfortable time of teething, seemed to speak, "Let me be quiet!" It is hardly possible that she can be other than plain, but, with God's help, I hope to make her good and happy.

"My beloved, plain child!" say I sometimes to her as I clasp her tenderly in my arms, for I would willingly reconcile her early to her fate.

No. 5.

But what ever will fate do with the nose of my Petrea? This nose is at present the most remarkable thing about her; and if it were not so large, she really would be a pretty child. We hope, however, that it will moderate itself in her growth.

Petrea is a little lively girl, with a turn for almost everything, whether good or bad, and with a dangerous desire to make herself remarkable, and to excite an interest. Her activity shows itself in destructiveness; yet she is good-hearted and most generous. In every kind of foolery she is a most willing ally with Henrik and Eva, whenever they will grant her so much favour; and if these three be heard whispering together, one may be quite sure that some roguery or other is on foot. There exists already, however, so much unquiet in her, that I fear her whole life will be such; but I will early teach her to turn herself to that which can change unrest into rest.

No. 6.

And now to the pet child of the house—for the youngest, the loveliest, the so-called “little one”—to her who with her white hands puts the sugar into the father's and mother's cup—the coffee without that would not taste good—to her whose little bed is not yet removed from the chamber of the parents, and who, every morning, creeping out of her own bed, lays her bright, curly little head on her father's shoulder, and sleeps again.

Could you only see the little two-years-old Gabriele, with her large, serious brown eyes; her refined, somewhat pale, but indescribably lovely countenance; her bewitching little gestures; you would be just as much taken with her as the rest, you would find it difficult, as we all do, not to show preference to her. She is a quiet little child, but very unlike her eldest sister. A predominating characteristic of Gabriele is love of the beautiful; she shows a decided aversion to what is ugly and inconvenient, and as decided a love for what is attractive. A most winning little gentility in appearance and manners, has occasioned the brother and sisters to call her “the little young lady,” or “the little princess.” Henrik is really in love with his little sister, kisses her small white hands with devotion, and in return she loves him with her whole heart. Towards the others she is very often somewhat ungracious, and our good friend the Assessor calls her frequently “the little gracious one,” and frequently also “the little ungracious one,” but then he has for her especially so many names; my wish is that in the end she may deserve the surname of “the amiable.”

Peace be with my young ones! There is not one of them which is not possessed of the material of peculiar virtue and excellence, and yet not also at the same time of the seed of some dangerous vice, which may ruin the good growth of God in them. May the endeavours both of their father and me be blessed in training these plants of heaven aright! But ah! the education of children is no easy thing, and all the many works on that subject which I have studied appear to me, whether the fault be in me or in them I cannot tell, but small helps.

Ah! I often find no other means than to class the child tenderly in my arms, and to weep bitterly over it, or else to kiss it in the fulness of my joy; and it often has appeared to me that such moments are not without their influence.

Beyond this, I endeavour as much as possible not to scold. I know how perpetual scolding crushes the free spirit and the innocent joyousness of childhood; and I sincerely believe that if one will only sedulously cultivate what is good in the character, and make in all instances what is good visible and attractive, the bad will by degrees fall away of itself.

I sing a great deal to my children. They are brought up with songs; for I wished early to make harmony, as it were, the very aliment of their souls. Several of them, especially my first-born and Eva, are really little enthusiasts in music; and every evening, as soon as twilight comes on, the children throng about me, and then I sit down to the piano, and either accompany myself, or play to little songs which they themselves sing. It is my Henrik's reward, when he has been very good for the whole day, that I should sit by his bed, and sing to him till he sleeps. He says that he then has such beautiful dreams. We often sit and talk for an hour instead; and the knowledge I have thus obtained of his active and pure spirit has given me the greatest delight. Whenever he lays out plans for his future life, he ends thus: “And when I am grown up a man, and have my own house, then, mother, thou shalt come and live with me, and I will keep so many maids to wait on thee, and thou shalt have so many flowers, and everything that thou art fond of, and shalt live just like a queen; only of an evening, when I go to bed, thou shalt sit beside me and sing me asleep; wilt thou not, dear mother?” Often too, when in the midst of his plans for the future and my songs, he has dropped asleep, I remain sitting still by the bed with my heart full to overflowing with joy and pride in this angel. Ernst declares that I spoil him. Ah, perhaps I do, but nevertheless it is a fact that I earnestly endeavour not to do so. After all, I can say of every one of my children what a friend of mine said of hers, that they are tolerably good; that is to say, they are not good enough for heaven.

This evening I am alone. Ernst is at our neighbour Sternhök's. It is my birthday to-day; but I have told no one, because I wished rather to celebrate it in a quiet communion with my own thoughts.

How at this moment the long past years come in review before me! I see myself once more in the house of my parents; in that good, joyful, beloved home! I see myself once more by thy side, my beloved and only sister, in that large, magnificent house, surrounded by meadows and villages. How we looked down upon them from high windows, and yet rejoiced that the sun streamed into the most lowly huts just as pleasantly as into our large saloons—everything seemed to us so well arranged.

Life then, Cecilia, was joyful and free from care. How we sate and wept over “Des Vœux Téméraires,” and over “Feodor and Maria,”—such were our cares then. Our life was made up of song, and dance, and merriment, with our so many cheerful neighbours; with the most

saccomplished of whom we got up enthusiasms for music and literature. We considered ourselves to be virtuous, because we loved those who loved us, and because we gave of our superfluity to those who needed it. Friendship was our passion. We were ready to die for friendship, but towards love we had hearts of stone. How we jested over our lovers, and what a pleasure would it not have been to us to act the parts of austere romance-heroines! How unmerciful we were, and—how easily our lovers consoled themselves! Then Ernst Frank came on a visit to us. The rumour of a learned and a strong-minded man preceded him and fixed our regards upon him, because women, whether well-informed or not themselves, are attracted by such men. Do you not remember how much he occupied our minds? how his noble person, his calm, self-assured demeanour, his frank, decided, yet always polite behaviour, charmed us at first, and then awed us?

One could say of him, that morally as well as physically he stood firmly. His deep mourning dress, together with an expression of quiet manly grief, which at times shaded his countenance, combined to make him interesting to us; nevertheless, you thought that he looked too stern, and I very soon lost in his presence my accustomed gaiety. Whenever his dark grave eyes were fixed upon me, I was conscious that they possessed a half bewitching, half oppressive power over me; I felt myself happy because of it, yet at the same time filled with anxiety; my very action was constrained, my hands became cold and did every thing blunderingly, nor ever did I speak so stupidly as when I observed that he listened. Aunt Lisette gave me one day this maxim, "My dear, remember what I now tell thee: if a man thinks that thou art a fool, it does not injure thee the least in his opinion; but if he once thinks that thou considerest him a fool, then art thou lost for ever with him!" With the last it may be just as it will—I have heard a clever young man declare that it would operate on him just like salt on fire—however, this is certain, that the first part of Aunt Lisette's maxim is correct, since my stupidity in Ernst's presence did not injure me at all in his opinion, and when he was kind and gentle, how inexpressibly agreeable he was!

His influence over me became greater each succeeding day: if his eyes beamed on me in kindness, it was as if a spring breeze passed through my soul; and if his glance was graver than common, I became still, and out of spirits. It seemed to me at times—and it is so even to this very day—that if this clear and wonderfully penetrating glance were only once, and with its full power, riveted upon me, my very heart would cease to beat. Yet after all, I am not sure whether I loved him. I hardly think I did; for when he was absent I then seemed to breathe so freely, yet at the same time, I would have saved his life by the sacrifice of my own.

In several respects we had no sympathies in common. He had no taste for music, which I loved passionately, and in reading too our feelings were so different. He yawned over my favourite romances, nay, he even sometimes would laugh when I was at the point of bursting into tears; I, on the contrary, yawned over his useful and learned books, and found them

more tedious than I could express. The world of imagination in which my thoughts delighted to exercise themselves, he valued not in the least, while the burdensome actuality which he was always seeking for in life, had no charm for me. Nevertheless, there were many points in which we accorded—these especially, were questions of morals—and whenever this was the case, it afforded both of us great pleasure.

And now came the time, Cecilia, in which you left me; when our fates separated themselves, although our hearts did not.

One day there were many strangers with us, and in the afternoon I played at shuttlecock with young cousin Erail, to whom we were so kind, and who deserved our kindness so well. How it happened I cannot tell, but before long Ernst took his place, and was my partner in the game. He looked unusually animated, and I felt gayer than common. He threw the shuttlecock excellently, and with a firm hand, but always let it fly a little way beyond me, so that I was obliged to step back a few paces each time to catch it, and thus unconsciously to myself was I driven, in the merry sport, through a long suite of rooms, till we came at last to one where we were quite alone, and a long way from the company. All at once then Ernst left off his play, and a change was visible in his whole appearance. I augured something amiss, and would gladly have made my escape, but I felt powerless; and then Ernst spoke so from his heart, so fervently, and with such deep tenderness, that he took my heart at once to himself. I laid my hand, although tremblingly, in his, and, almost without knowing what I did, consented to go through life by his side.

I had just then passed my nineteenth year; and my beloved parents sanctioned the union of their daughter with a man so respectable and so universally esteemed, and one, moreover, whom everybody prophesied would rise to high consideration in the state—and Ernst, whose nature it was to accomplish everything rapidly which he undertook, managed it so that in a very short time our marriage was celebrated.

Some members of my family thought that by this union I had descended a step or two in life. I think not; on the contrary, the very reverse. I was of high birth, had several not undistinguished family connexions, and was brought up in a brilliant circle, in all the superficial accomplishments of the day, amid superfluity and thoughtlessness. He was a man who had shaped out his own course in life, who, by his own honest endeavours, and through many self-denials, had raised his father's house from its depressed condition, and had made the future prospects of his mother and sister comfortable and secure: he was a man self-dependent, upright and good—yes, soon, and that I discover more and more the deeper knowledge I obtain of his true character, even though the outward manner may be somewhat severe—in truth, I feel myself very inferior beside him.

The first year of our marriage we passed, at their desire, in the house of my parents; and if I could only have been less conscious of his superiority, and could only have been more certain that he was satisfied with me, nothing would have been wanting to my happiness. Everybody waited upon me; and perhaps it was on

this account, that Ernst in comparison seemed somewhat cold; I was the petted child of my too kind parents; I was thankless and peevish, and ah, some little of this still remains! Nevertheless, it was during this very time, that, under the influence of my husband, the true beauty and reality of life became more and more perceptible to my soul. Married life and family ties, country and the world, revealed their true relationships, and their holy signification to my mind. Ernst was my teacher; I looked up to him with love, but not without fear.

Many were the projects which we formed in these summer days, and which floated brightly before my romantic fancy. Among these was a journey on foot through the beautiful country west of Sweden, and this was one of the favourite schemes of my Ernst. His mother—from whom our little Petrea has derived her somewhat singular name—was of Norway, and many a beloved thought of her seemed to have interwoven itself with the valleys and mountains, which, as in a wonderfully-beautiful fairy tale, she had described to him in the stories she told. All these recollections are a sort of romantic region in Ernst's soul, and thither he betakes himself whenever he would refresh his spirit, or lay out something delightful for the future. "Next year," he would then exclaim, "will we take a journey!" And then we laid out together our route on the map, and I determined on the dress which I would wear as his travelling-companion when we would go and visit "that sea-engarlanded Norway." Ah! there soon came for me other journeys.

It was during these days also that my first-born saw the light; my beautiful boy! who so fettered both my love and my thoughts that Ernst grew almost jealous. How often did I steal out of bed at night in order to watch him while he slept! He was a lively, restless child, and it therefore was a peculiar pleasure for me to see him at rest; besides which, he was so angelically lovely in sleep! I could have spent whole nights bending over his cradle.

So far, Cecilia, all went with us as in a romance, out of which nourishment for heart and soul might be obtained in youth. But far other times came. In the first place, the sad change in the circumstances of my parents, which operated so severely on our position in life; and then for me so many children—cares without end, grief and sickness! My body and mind must both have given way under their burden, had Ernst not been the man he is.

It suited his character to struggle against the stream; it was a sort of pleasure to him to combat with it, to meet difficulties, and to overcome them. With each succeeding year he imposed more business upon himself, and by degrees, through the most resolute industry, he was enabled to bring back prosperity to his house. And then how unwearingly kind he was to me! How tenderly sustaining in those very moments, when without him I must have found myself so utterly miserable! How many a sleepless night has he passed on my account! How often has he soothed to sleep a sickly child in his arms! And then, too, every child which came, as it were only to multiply his cares, and increase the necessity for his labour, was to him a delight—was received as a gift of

God's mercy—and its birth made a festival in the house. How my heart has thanked him, and how has his strength and assurance nerved me!

When little Gabriele was born, I was very near death; and it is my firm belief that, without Ernst's care for me, I must then have parted from my little ones. During the time of great weakness which succeeded this, my foot scarcely ever touched the ground. I was carried by Ernst himself wherever I would. He was unwearied in goodness and patience towards the sick mother. Should she not now, that she is again in health, dedicate her life to him! Ah, yes, that should she, and that will she! Alas, that her ability is less strong than her will!

Do you know one thing, Cecilia, which often occasions me great trouble? It is that I am not a clever housewife; that I can neither take pleasure in all the little cares and details which the well-being of a house really requires, nor that I have memory for these things; more especially is the daily caring for dinner irksome to me. I myself have but little appetite; and it is so unpleasant to me to go to sleep at night, and to get up in the morning with my head full of schemes for cooking. By this means, it happens that sometimes my husband's domestic comforts are not such as he has a right to demand. Hitherto my weak health, the necessary care of the children, and our rather narrow circumstances, have furnished me with sufficient excuses; but these now will avail me no longer; my health is again established, and our greater prosperity furnishes the means for better household management.

On this account, I now exert myself to perform all my duties well; but, ah! how pleasant it will be when the little Louise is sufficiently grown up, that I may lay part of the housekeeping burdens on her shoulders. I fancy to myself that she will have peculiar pleasure in all these things.

I am to-day two and thirty years old. It seems to me that I have entered a new period of my life: my youth lies behind me, I am advanced into middle age, and I well know what both this and my husband have a right to demand from me. May a new and stronger being awake in me! May God support me, and Ernst be gentle towards his erring wife!

Ernst should have married a more energetic woman. My nervous weakness makes my temper irritable, and I am so easily annoyed. His activity of mind often disturbs me more than it is reasonable or right that it should; for instance, I get regularly into a state of excitement, if he only steadfastly fixes his eyes on a wall, or on any other object. I immediately begin to fancy that we are going instantly to have a new door opened, or some other change brought about. And oh! I have such a great necessity for rest and quiet!

One change which is about to take place in our house I cannot anticipate without uneasiness. It is the arrival of a Candidate of Philosophy, Jacob Jacobi, as tutor for the children. He will this summer take my wild boy under his charge, and instruct the sisters in writing, drawing, and arithmetic; and in the autumn, accompany my first-born to a great school. I dread

this new member in our domestic circle; he may, if he be not amiable, so easily introduce annoyance into it; yet if he be amiable, he will be so heartily welcome to me, especially as assistant in the wearisome writing lessons, with their eternal "Henrik, sit still!"—"Hold the pen properly, Louise!"—"Look at the copy, Leonore!"—"Don't forget the points and strokes, Eva!"—"Petrea, don't wipe out the letters with your nose!" Beyond all this, my first-born begins to have less and less esteem for my Latin knowledge; and Ernst is sadly discontented with his wild pranks. Jacobi will give him instruction, together with Nils Gabriel, the son of the Sheriff Sternhök, a most industrious and remarkably sensible boy, from whose influence on Henrik I augur great things.

The Candidate is warmly recommended to us by a friend of my husband, the excellent Bishop B.; yet notwithstanding this, his actions at the University did not particularly redound to his honour. Through credulity and folly, he has run through a nice little property which had been left him by three old aunts, who had brought him up and spoiled him into the bargain. Indeed, his career has hitherto not been quite a correct one. Bishop B. conceals nothing of all this, but says that he is much attached to the young man; praises his head, and his excellent gifts as a preceptor, and prays us to receive him cordially, with all parental tenderness, into our family. We shall soon see whether he be deserving of such hearty sympathy. For my part, I must confess that my motherly tenderness for him is as yet fast asleep.

Yet, after all, this inmate does not terrify me half as much as a visit with which I am shortly threatened. Of course you have heard of the lady of the late Major S., the beautiful Emilie, my husband's "old flame," as I call her, out of a little malice for all the vexation her perfections, which are so very opposite to mine, have occasioned me. She has been now for several years a widow, has lived long abroad, and now will pay us a visit on her return to her native land. Ernst and she have always kept up the most friendly understanding with each other, although she refused his hand; and that is a noble characteristic of my Ernst, and one which, in his sex, is not often found, that this rejection did not make him indifferent to the person who gave it. On the contrary, he professes the most warm admiration of this Emilie, and has not ceased to correspond with her; and I, for I read all their letters, cannot but confess her extraordinary knowledge and powers of mind. But to know all this near is what I would indeed be very gladly excused, since I cannot help thinking that my husband's "old flame" has something of cold-heartedness in her, and my heart has not great inclination to become warm towards her.

It strikes ten o'clock. Ernst will not come home before twelve. I shall leave you now, Cecilia, that — shall I confess my secret to you! You know that one of my greatest pleasures is the reading of a good novel, but this pleasure I have almost entirely renounced, because whenever I have a really interesting one in my hand, I find it so difficult to lay it down before I reach the last page. That, however, does not answer in my case; and since the time

when through the reading of Madame De Staël's *Corinne*, two dinners, one great wash, and seventeen lesser domestic affairs, all came to a stand still, and my domestic peace nearly suffered shipwreck, I have made a resolution to give up all novel-reading, at least for the present. But still it is so necessary for me to have a literary relaxation of one kind or another, that since I have determined to read no more novels, I have myself begun to write one. Yes, Cecilia, my youthful habits will not leave me, even in the midst of the employments and prosaic cares of every-day life; and the flowers which once cast their fragrance so sweetly around me, will yet once more bloom for me in remembrance, and encircle my drooping head with a refreshing garland. The joyful days which I passed by your side; the impressions and the agreeable scenes — now they seem doubly so — which made our youth so beautiful, so lively, and so fresh — all these I will work out into one insignificant picture, before the regular flight of years has made them perish from my soul. This employment enlivens and strengthens me; and if, in an evening, my nervous toothache, which is the certain result of over-exertion or of vexation, comes on, there is nothing which will dissipate it like the going on with my little romance. For this very reason, therefore, because this evening my old enemy has plagued me more than common, I have recourse to my innocent opiate.

But Ernst shall not find me awake when he returns: this I have promised him. Good night, best Cecilia!

We will now, in this place, give a little description of the letter-writer — of the mother of Henrik, Louise, Eva, Leonore, Petrea, and Gabriele.

Beautiful she certainly was not, but nature had given to her a poble growth, which was still as fine and delicate as that of a young girl. The features were not regular, but the mouth was fresh and bewitching; the complexion fair, the lips of a lovely bright red, and the clear blue eyes soft and kind. All her actions were graceful: she had beautiful hands — which is something particularly lovely in a lady — yet she was not solicitous to keep them always in view, and this beautified them still more. She dressed with much taste, almost always in light colours; this, and the soft rose scent which she loved, and which always accompanied her, lent to her whole being a something especially mild and agreeable. One might compare her to moonlight; she moved softly, and her voice was low and sweet, which, as Shakspeare says, is "an excellent thing in woman." Seeing her, as one often might do, reclining on a soft couch, playing with a flower or caressing a child, one could scarcely fancy her the superintendent of a large household, with all its appertaining work-people and servants; and beyond this, as the instructor of many children: yet love and sense of duty had led her to the performance of all this, had reconciled her to that which her natural inclinations were so averse to; nay, by degrees, indeed, had made these very cares dear to her — whatever concerned the children lay near to her heart; whilst order, pleasantness, and peace regulated the house. The contents of the linen-press were dear to her; a snow-white table-

cloth was her delight; grey linen, dust, and flies, were hated by her, as far as she could hate anything.

But let us now proceed with our narrative.

We left Elise at her manuscript, by which she became soon so deeply occupied that the clock struck eleven unperceived by her; nor was she aware of the flight of time till a sudden terror thrilled her as she heard her husband return. To throw her manuscript into her drawer, and quickly undress, had been an easy thing for her, and she was about to do so, when the thought occurred, "I have never hitherto kept my proceedings secret from Ernst, and to-day I will not begin to do so;" and with these thoughts she remained at her writing-table till he entered the room.

"What! yet up, and writing?" said he, with a displeased glance. "Is it thus you keep your promise, Elise?"

"Pardon me, Ernst," said she; "I had forgotten myself."

"And for what purpose," asked he, "are you writing? No, let me see! What! a novel, as I live! Now, what use is this?"

"What use is it?" returned Elise. "Ah, to give me pleasure."

"But people should have sense and reason in their pleasures," said the Judge. "Now it gives me no pleasure at all that you should sit up at night ruining your eyes on account of a miserable novel; if there were a fire here I would burn it!"

"It would be a great deal better," returned Elise, mildly, "if you went to bed and said your prayers piously, rather than thought about such an *auto-da-fé*. How have you amused yourself at the Sheriff's?"

"You want now to be mixing the cards," said he. "Look at me, Elise; you are pale; your pulse is excited! Say my prayers, indeed! I have a great mind to give you a lecture! Is it reasonable—is it prudent, to sit up at night and become pale, in order to write what is good for nothing! It really makes me quite angry that you can be so foolish, so childish. It actually is not worth while your going to baths, sending to the east and to the west to consult physicians, and giving oneself all kind of trouble to regain your health, when after all you go and do every possible thing in the world to destroy it!"

"Do not be angry, Ernst," besought Elise; "do not look so stern on me to-night, Ernst; no, not to-night."

"Yes, indeed!" replied he, but in a tone which had become at once milder, "because it is two-and-thirty years to-day since you came into the world, do you think that you have a right to be absolutely childish?"

"Put that down to my account," said Elise, smiling, yet with a tear in her eye.

"Put it down to your account," repeated the Judge. "Yes, I suppose so. People go on putting down to the account till all and every thing goes mad. I should like to pack all novels and novel-writers out of the world together! The world never will be wise till that is done; nor will you either. In the meantime, however, it is as well that I have found you awake, else I must have woken you to prove that you cannot conceal from me, not even for

once, how old you are. Here then is the punishment for your bad intention."

"Ah! Walter Scott's romances!" exclaimed Elise, receiving a set of volumes from her husband; "and such a magnificent edition! Thanks! thanks! you good, best Ernst! But you are a beautiful lawgiver; you promote the very things which you condemn."

"Promise me, only," returned he, "not to spend the night in reading or writing novels. Think only how precious your health is to so many of us! Do you think I should be so provoked, if you were less dear to me! In a few years, Elise," added he, "when the children are older, and you are stronger, we will turn a summer to really good account, and take our Norwegian journey. You shall breathe the fresh mountain air, and see the beautiful valleys and the sea, and that will do you much more good than all the mineral waters in the world. But come, now, let us go and see the children; we will not wake them, however, although I have brought with me some confectionary, which I can lay on their pillows. There is an apple for you."

The married pair went into the children's room, where the faithful old Fin-woman, Brigitta, lay and guarded, like the dragon, her treasures. The children slept as children sleep. The father stroked the beautiful curling hair of the boy, but impressed a kiss on the rosy cheek of each girl. After this the parents returned to their own chamber. Elise lay down to rest; her husband sat down to his desk, but so as to shade the light from his wife. The low sounds of a pen moving on paper came to her ear as if in sleep. As the clock struck two she awoke, and he was still writing.

Few men required and allowed themselves so little rest as Ernst Frank.

CHAPTER II.

THE CANDIDATE.

It was in the twilight. The children were at play in the great hall, swarming about in holes and corners, when the sudden stopping of a travelling carriage before the door operated upon the wild little flock, much as a stream of cold water on a swarm of bees. The queen-bee of the children-swarm, the wise little Louise, sat herself down at the window, and four other little heads clustered themselves about her, fervent and inquisitive, and almost pushing her away in their impatient zeal to get a peep at the arrival.

It was a gentleman who stepped lightly out of that travelling carriage, but whether young or old, the children could not see; this, however, they saw, that their father came quickly to the door, shook the traveller by the hand, and conducted him into the house; whilst a very small portmanteau was carried after him. Seeing this, the little swarm hastened to their mother; to whom they gave, in all possible degrees of tone, from a low whisper to a loud announcement, the information that for certain "the tutor was come."

Elise, who had company with her, calmed with a "yes, yes!" and "so!" the excited state of

the children. Louise composed herself quickly; and, as it seemed to have occurred to her that she had somewhat forgotten her own dignity, she seated herself quietly, and becomingly among the "grown people," whilst the other children gathered themselves in a little group in one corner of the room, whispering and wondering; and whoever had looked at them might have seen many a time Petrea's nose peering forth from the little group.

Judge Frank sent to announce to his wife the arrival of the expected guest, who would be introduced to her as soon as he had completed his toilette. Presently afterwards another messenger came, desiring curling-irons for the Candidate.

"It is an amazingly long toilette!" thought Elise many a time during the full hour which elapsed in waiting; and it must be confessed that her nose more than once during the hour took the same direction as Petrea's.

At last the steps of two gentlemen were heard, and there advanced through the open parlour door a well-shod foot and a handsome leg, belonging to a well-formed though somewhat compressed figure, which carried a twenty-year-old head, of a jovial, comely appearance, gracefully on its shoulders, and was all, from head to foot, appareled in the newest mode. This was the Candidate. He cast a glance first at his foot, and then at the lady of the house, whom he approached with the most unconstrained self-possession, exhibiting the while a row of dazzlingly white teeth. Odour of eau de Portugal diffused itself through the room.

The Judge, who followed, and whose bearing and simple demeanour contrasted with those of the new guest, introduced the candidate Jacobi. Various unimportant polite speeches were made by everybody, and then they all took their seats. The children then came forward, and made their bows and curtsies. Henrik eyed his future preceptor with a joyous, confiding glance; Louise curtsied very becomingly, and then made several steps backward as the young man seemed inclined to take the great liberty of kissing her; whilst Petrea turned up her nose with an inquisitive, sancy air. The Candidate took the kindest notice of them all; shook all of them by the hand; inquired their names; looked at himself in the glass; and arranged his curls.

"What kind of being have we got here!" thought Elise with secret anxiety. "He is a fop—a perfect fop! How could Bishop B—choose him out as teacher for my poor little children! He will think much more of looking at himself in the glass than of looking after them. The fine breast-pin that he is wearing is of false stones. He laughs to shew his white teeth. An actual fop—a fool perhaps! There, now, he looks at himself again in the glass!"

Elise sought to catch her husband's eye, but he evidently avoided meeting hers; yet something of discontent, and something of embarrassment too, shewed itself in his manner. The Candidate, on the contrary, appeared not in the slightest degree embarrassed, but reclined perfectly at his ease in an arm chair, and cast searching glances on three ladies, who evidently were strangers in the company. The eldest of these, who kept on sewing incessantly, appeared to be upwards of forty, and was distinguished

by a remarkably quiet, bright, and friendly aspect. Judge Frank and she talked much together. The other two appeared neither of them to have attained her twentieth year: the one was pale and fair; the other a pretty brunette; both of them were agreeable, and looked good and happy. These ladies were introduced to Jacobi as Miss Evelina Burdies and her adopted daughters, Laura and Karie. Laura had always one of the children on her knee, and it was upon her that his eyes were most particularly fixed. Perhaps it was no wonder, for it indeed was a pretty picture—Laura, with the lovely little Gabriele on her knee, decorated with the flow-ers, bracelets, necklace; in short, with all the pretty things that just before had ornamented herself.

The conversation soon became general, and was remarkably easy, and the Candidate had an opportunity of taking his part well and interestingly in it, whilst speaking of certain distinguished men in the University from which he was just come. Elise mentioned one celebrated man whom she had a great desire to see, upon which Jacobi said he had lately made a little sketch of him, which, on her expressing a wish to see it, he hastened to fetch.

He returned with a portfolio containing many drawings and pictures; partly portraits, and partly landscapes of his own pencil; they were not deficient in talent, and afforded pleasure to the company. First one portrait was recognised and then another, and at last the Candidate himself. The children were quite enchanted, and thronged with enthusiasm round the table. The Candidate placed some of them on his knee, and seemed particularly observant of their pleasure, and it was not long therefore before they appeared entirely to forget that he was only a new acquaintance—all at least excepting Louise, who held herself rather *fière*, and "the baby," which was quite ungracious towards him.

Above all the pictures which the portfolio contained, were the children most affected and enchanted by one in sepia, which represented a girl kneeling before a rose-bush, from which she was gathering roses, whilst a lyre lay against a gravestone near her.

"Oh, how sweet! how divinely beautiful!" exclaimed they. Petrea seemed as if she actually could not remove her eyes from the charming picture, which the Candidate himself also seemed to consider the gem of his little collection.

It was the custom at the Franks, that every evening, as soon as the clock had struck eight, the little herd of children, conducted by Louise, withdrew to their bed-chamber, which had once occasioned the wakeful Petrea to say, that night was the worst thing God had ever made: for which remark she received a reproving glance from Louise, accompanied by the maxim, "that people should not talk in that way."

In order, however, to celebrate the present day, which was a remarkable one, the children were permitted to take supper with their parents, and even to sit up as late as they did. The prospect of this indulgence, the Candidate, the pictures, all combined to elevate the spirits of the children in no ordinary degree; so much so, indeed, that Petrea had the boldness, whilst they were regaling on roast chicken, to propose to the

Candidate that the picture of the girl and the rose-bush should be put up for a prize on the breaking of a merrythought between them; promising, that if she had the good fortune to win it, she would give as a recompense, a picture of her own composition, which should represent some scene in a temple. Louise appeared scandalized at her sister's proposal, and shook her little white hand at her.

The mother also violently opposed Petrea's proposition; and she, poor girl, became scarlet, and deeply abashed before the reproving glances which were cast upon her; yet the Candidate was good-natured enough, after the first astonishment was over, to yield in the most cheerful manner to Petrea's proposal, and zealously to declare that the affair should be managed just as she would. He accordingly set himself, with an appearance of great accuracy and zeal, to measure the length of both limbs of the merrythought, and then counted three; the mother all this time hoping with herself that he would so manage it that he himself should retain the head—but no! the head remained in Petrea's hand, and she uttered a loud cry of joy. After supper, the parents again opposed what had taken place; but the Candidate was so cheerful and so determined that it should remain as it was settled already, that Petrea, the happiest of mortals, ventured to carry out the girl and rose-bush as her own property; yet, for all this, she did not miss a motherly warning by the way, which mingled some tears with her joy. The Candidate however had, in the mean time, on account of his kindness towards the children generally, and his good-nature towards Petrea in particular, made a favourable impression on the parents.

"Who knows," said Elise to her husband, "but that he may turn out very well. He has, it is true, his faults, but he has his good-qualities too; there is something really very agreeable in his voice and countenance; but he must leave off that habit of looking at himself so continually in his glass."

"I feel assured that he must have worth," said the Judge, "from the recommendation of my friend B. This vanity, and these foppish habits of his, we shall soon know how to get rid of; the man himself is unquestionably good; and, dear Elise, be kind to him, and manage so that he shall feel at home with us."

The children, also, in their place of rest, made their observations on the Candidate.

"I think he is much handsomer than my father;" said little Petrea.

"I think," said Louise, in a tone of correction, "that nobody can be more perfect than my father."

"That is true, excepting mother;" exclaimed Eva, out of her little bed.

"Ah," said Petrea, "I like him so much; he has given me that lovely picture! Do you know what I shall call that girl? I shall call her Rosa; and I'll tell you a long story about her. There was once upon a time——"

All the sisters listened eagerly, for Petrea could relate better and prettier stories than any of them. It was therefore said among themselves that Petrea was very clever; but as Louise was desirous that Petrea should not build much on this opinion, she now listened to her history without bestowing upon it one token

of applause, although it was found to be sufficiently interesting to keep the whole little auditorium awake till midnight.

"What is to become of my preserves!" thought Elise, one day, as she remarked the quantity which vanished from the plate of the Candidate; but when that same evening she saw the little Gabriele merrily, and without reproach, pulling about his curls; when she saw him join the children at their play, and make every game which they played instructive to them; when she saw him armed with a great paper weapon, which he called his sword, and deal about blows to those who counted false, thereby exciting greater activity of mind as well as more mirth, she thought to herself, "he may eat just as much preserves as he likes; I will take care that he never goes short of them."

If, however, the Candidate rose higher in the regards of one party, there still was another with which his actions did not place him in the best point of view. This was Brigitta, to whom the care of some few things in the house were confided; and she began to look troubled, and out of sorts. For several days, whatever her cause of annoyance might be, she preserved silence, till one evening, when expanding the nostrils of her little snubby nose, she thus addressed her mistress:

"The gracious lady must be so good as to give out to the cook just twice as much coffee as usual; because if things are to go on in this way, we cannot do with less. He, the master there, empties the little coffee-pot himself every morning! Never, in all my life, have I seen such a coffee-bibber!"

The following evening came a new announcement of trouble.

"Now it is not alone a coffee-bibber," said poor Brigitta, with a gloomy countenance and wide-staring eyes, "but a calf it is, and a devourer of rusks! What do you think, gracious lady, but the rusk-basket, which I filled only yesterday, is to-day as good as empty—only two rusks and two or three crumbs remaining! Then for cream! Why every morning he empties the jug!"

"Ah, it is very good," said Elise mildly, yet evasively, "that he enjoys things so much."

"And only look, in heaven's name!" lamented poor Brigitta another day, "he is also quite a sugar-rat! Why dear, gracious lady, he must put in at least twenty pieces of sugar into one cup of coffee, or he never could empty a sugar-basin as he does! I must beg you to give me the key of the chest, that I may fill it again. God grant that all this may have a good ending!"

Brigitta could venture to say much, for she had grown old in the house; had carried Elise as a child in her arms; and from affection to her, had followed her when she left her father's house: besides this, she was a most excellent guardian for the children; but as now these complaints of hers were too frequently repeated, Elise said to her seriously, "Dear Brigitta, let him eat and drink as much as he likes, without any observation: I would willingly allow him a pound of sugar and coffee a day, if he only became, as I hope he may, a good friend and preceptor for the children."

Brigitta walked away quite provoked, and

grumbling to herself: "Well, well!" said she, "old Brita can be silent, yes, that she can;—well, well! we shall see what will be the end of it. Sugar and rusk he eats, and salt-fish he can't eat!—well, well!"

All this time Jacobi was passing his days in peace, little imagining of the clouds which were gathering over his head, or of his appellations of coffee-bibber, calf, rusk-devourer, and sugar-rat; and with each succeeding day it became more evident that Elise's hopes of him were well-grounded. He developed even more and more a good and amiable disposition, and the most remarkable talents as teacher. The children became attached to him with the most intense affection; nor did their obedience and reverence for him as preceptor prevent them, in their freer hours, from playing him all kind of little pranks. Petrea was especially rich in such inventions; and he was too kind, too much delighted with their pleasure, not willingly to assist, or even at times allow himself to be the butt of their jokes.

Breakfast, which for the elder members of the family was commonly served at eleven o'clock, furnished the children with an excellent opportunity for their amusement. The Candidate was particularly fond of eggs, and therefore, when under a bulky-looking napkin he expected to find some, he not unfrequently discovered, instead of eggs, balls of worsted, playing-balls, and other such indigestible articles; on which discovery of his, a stifled laughter would commonly be heard at the door, and a cluster of children's heads be visible, which he in pretended anger assailed with the false eggs, and which quickly withdrew amid peals of laughter. Often too, when, according to old Swedish usage, he would take a glass of spirits, he found pure water instead of Cognac in his mouth; and the little advocates of temperance were always near enough to enjoy his astonishment, although sufficiently distant, also, that not one drop of the shower which was then sent at them should reach them, though it made them leap high enough for delight. And really it was wonderful how often these little surprises could be repeated, and how the Candidate let himself so constantly be surprised. But he was too much occupied by his own thoughts (the thoughts of course of a student of philosophy), in order to be on his guard against the tricks of these young merry-andrews. One day—

But before we proceed farther we must observe, that although the toilette of the Candidate seemed externally to be always so well supplied, yet still it was, in fact, in but a very indifferent condition. No wonder, therefore, was it, that though his hat outwardly was always well brushed, and was apparently in good order, yet that it had within a sadly tattered lining.

One day, therefore, as the Candidate had laid his hat in a corner of the room, and was sitting near the sofa in a very earnest conversation, Henrik, Petrea, and Eva gathered themselves about that symbol of freedom with the most suspicious airs and gestures of conspiracy. Nobody paid any attention to them, when after awhile the Candidate rose to leave the room, and going through the door would have put on his hat,—but, behold! a very singular revolution

had taken place within it, and a mass of tin soldiers, stones, matches, and heaven knows what besides, came rattling down upon his head; and even one little chimney-sweeper fell astride on his nose. Nothing could compare with the immeasurable delight of the children at the astonishment of the Candidate, and the comic grimaces and head-shakings with which he received this their not very polite jest.

No wonder was it, therefore, that the children loved the Candidate so well.

The little Louise, however, who more and more began to reckon herself as one of the grown people, and only very rarely took part in the conspiracies against the Candidate, shook her head at this prank of her brother and sisters, and looked out a new piece of dark silk from her drawer (Louise was a hoarder by nature), possessed herself secretly of the Candidate's hat, and with some little help from her mother, had then her secret pleasure also, and could laugh in her own sleeve at his amazement when he discovered a brand new lining in his hat.

"Our Louise is a sensible little girl," said the Judge, well pleased, to his wife, who had made him a third in this plot; and after that day she was called both by father and mother "our sensible little Louise."

Scarcely had Jacobi been three weeks in the family of the Franks, before Elise felt herself disposed to give him a new title, that of Disputer-General, so great was the ability he discovered to dispute on every subject, from human free-will to rules for cookery; nay, even for the eating of eggs.

On this subject Elise wrote thus to her sister Cecilia:—"But however polite and agreeable the Candidate may be generally, still he is just as wearisome and obstinate in disputation; and as there is nobody in the house that makes any pretension to rival him in certain subtleties of argument, he is in great danger of considering himself a miracle of metaphysical light, which he is not, I am persuaded, by any means, since he has much more skill in rendering down than in building up, in perplexing than in making clear. Ernst is no friend of metaphysical hair-splitting, and when Jacobi begins to doubt the most perceptible and most certain things—'what is perceptible, what is certain?' the Candidate will inquire—he grows impatient, shrugs his shoulders, goes to his writing-table, and leaves me to combat it out, although, for my part, I would gladly have nothing to do with it. Should I, however, for a while carry on the contest boldly, the scholar then will overwhelm me with learned words and arguments, and then I too flee, and leave him *maitre du champ de bataille*. He believes then that I am convinced, at least of his power, which yet however is not the case; and if fortune does not bestow upon me a powerful ally against him, he may imagine so. Nevertheless, I am not without some curiosity to hear a system which he has promised to explain to me this evening, and according to which everything in the world ought to be so good and consistent. These subjects have always an interest for me, and remind me of the time when you and I, Cecilia, like two butterflies, went fluttering over the earth, pausing about its flowers, and building up for ourselves pretty theories on the origin of life and all things. Since then I

had almost forgotten them. Think only if the mythology of our youth should present itself again in the system of the Candidate!"

Here Elise was interrupted by the entrance of the troop of children.

"Might we borrow Gabriele?" "Mother, lend us Gabriele!" besought several coaxing little voices.

"Gabriele, wilt thou not come and play with us?" and with those words Petrea held up a gingerbread heart, which so operated on the heart of the little one, that at once she yielded to the wishes of brother and sisters.

"Ah, but you must take great care of her, my little angel!" said the mother; "Louise, dear, take her under your charge; look after her, and see that no harm befall her!"

"Yes, of course," said Louise, with a consequential countenance: and the jubilant children carried off the borrowed treasure.

Elise took her work, and the Candidate, with a look of great importance, seated himself before her, in order to initiate her into the mysteries of his system. Just, however, at the moment when he had opened his mouth to begin, after having hemmed a few times, a shrill little barking, and the words, "your most devoted servant," were heard at the door, and a person entered curtsying with an air of conscious worth, and with a little poodle in her arms—a person with whom we will have the honour to commence a new chapter.

CHAPTER III.

THE CHAMBERLAIN'S LADY.

WHERE is there not *haute volée*? Above the heavenly hosts are outspread the wings of cherubim and seraphim; and in the poultry-yards of earth the geese exalt their wings high over the other lesser feathered creatures. It belongs to the ordination of the world.

The Chamberlain's lady, Gunilla W., belonged incontestably to the highest *haute volée* in the excellent city of X., where we have had the honour of making the acquaintance of the family of the Franks. She was the sister of the Sheriff Sternhök, and inhabited the third story of the house of which the Franks inhabited the second, and Evelina Berndes the first.

This lady had spent her youth at Court, and passed many a day of wearisome constraint, and many a night in making those clothes which were to conceal from the world how poor Miss Gunilla was; yet neither night nor day did she complain either of constraint or of poverty, for she possessed under a plain exterior a strong and quiet spirit.

An old aunt used to preach to her thus: "Eat, that thou mayst grow stout; if thou art stout, thou wilt grow handsome; and if thou art handsome, thou wilt get married."

Miss Gunilla, who never ate much, and who did not eat one mouthful more for this warning, grew neither fat nor handsome; yet on account of her excellent disposition she was beloved by every one, and especially by a young rich Chamberlain of the court, who, through his own good qualities and excellent heart, won her affections, and thus Miss Gunilla became Mistress. After

this, in the circle of her friends she was accustomed to be called Mrs. Gunilla; which freedom we also shall sometimes take with her here.

Shortly after her marriage, and in consequence of cold, her husband became a sad invalid. For thirty years she lived separated from the world, a faithful and lonely attendant of the sick man; and what she bore and what she endured the world knew not, for she endured all in silence. For several years her husband could not bear the light; she learned, therefore, to knit in darkness, and thus made a large knitted carpet. "Into this carpet," said she, as she once spoke accidentally of herself, "have I knit many tears!"

One of the many hypochondriacal fancies of her husband was, that he was about to fall into a yawning abyss, and only could believe himself safe so long as he held the hand of his wife. Thus for one month after another she sate by his couch.

At length, the grave opened for him; and thanking his wife for the happiness he had enjoyed in the house of sickness on earth, he sank to rest, in the full belief of a land of blessedness beyond. When he was gone, it seemed to her as if she were of no more use than an old almanack; but here also again her soul raised itself under its burden, and she regulated her life with peace and decision. In course of years she grew more cheerful, and the originality of her talents and disposition which nature had given to her, and which, in her solitude, had undisturbedly followed their own bent, brought a freshness with them into social life, into which she entered at first rather from resolution than from feeling at ease in it.

"The Lord ordains all things for the best," that had always been, and still remained, the firm anchorage of her soul. But it was not this alone which gave to her the peace and gentleness which announced themselves in her voice, and diffused a true grace over her aged and not handsome countenance; for even as the sunken sun often throws the loveliest light upon the earth which it has left, so does a beloved, but departed human being cast a light of holy remembrance on the remaining solitary friend. Mrs. Gunilla herself lived in such remembrance; she knew it not, but ever since the death of her husband the dark pictures of her suffering had vanished more and more, and her own person, dignified by patience and suffering, became ennobled as by a transfiguration; the light which was in her soul cast a glory around her. She seldom mentioned the name of her husband; but when she did so, it was like a breath of summer air in voice and countenance.

She collected good people about her, and loved to promote their happiness; and whenever there was a young couple whose narrow circumstances, or whose fears for the future, filled them with anxiety, or a young but indigent man who was about to fall into debt and difficulty, Mrs. Gunilla was ever at hand, even though she came late. She had nevertheless her faults, and these, as we proceed, we shall become acquainted with.

We shall now endeavour to sketch her portrait—the size of life. Age between fifty and sixty; figure tall, stiff, well-made, not too thin; besides Jeremias Munter she might be called

FAMILY CARES AND FAMILY JOYS.

stout; complexion, pale yellow; the nose and chin coming together, the mouth falling in; the eyes grey and small, forehead smooth, and agreeably shaded by silver hair; the hands still handsome, and between the thumb and delicate tip of the forefinger a pinch of snuff, which was commonly held in certain prospective towards the nose, whilst with an elbow resting on the arm of sofa or easy chair, she gave little lectures or read aloud, for it was one of her weaknesses to suppose that she knew every thing.

During her long hermit-life she had been accustomed wholly to neglect her toilette; and her old silk gown, from which the wadding peeped out from many a hole, especially at the elbows; her often-mended collar, and her drooping cap, the ribbons of which were flecked with many a stain of snuff, were always a trouble to Elise's love of order and purity. Notwithstanding all this, there was a certain air about Mrs. Gunilla, which carried off all; and with her character, rank, property, and consideration, she was *haute volée*, spite of torn gown and snuff-flecked ribbons, and had great influence among the best society of the city.

She considered herself somewhat related to Elise, was very fond of her, and used very often to impart to her, her opinions on education (N.B.—Mrs. Gunilla never had children)—on which account many people in the city accused Elise of weakness towards the *haute volée*, and the postmistress Bask and the general-shopkeeper Snur considered it quite as much a crime as a failing.

There was in Mrs. Gunilla's voice, manners, and bearing, a something very imposing; her curtsy was usually very stately and low, and this brings us again to her entrance into Elise's room. Elise, the moment she entered, quickly rose and welcomed her, introducing Jacobi at the same time.

At the first glance, Jacobi uttered an exclamation of joyful surprise, approached her with an appearance of the greatest cordiality, seized her hand, which he kissed reverentially, and felicitated himself on the happiness of seeing her again.

The little eyes of the Chamberlain's lady twinkled, and she exclaimed, "O heavens! my heart's dearest! Nay, that is very pleasant! He, he, he!"

"How!" exclaimed Elise in astonishment, "Mr. Jacobi, do you know—Aunt W., do you know Mr. Jacobi?"

The Candidate appeared about to give an explanation, but this Mrs. Gunilla, with a faint crimson overspreading the pale yellow cheek, and a twitch of the eyebrow, prevented, and with a quick voice she said, "We once lived in the same house."

She then desired that the conversation which her entrance had interrupted, and which appeared to have been very important, might proceed. "At least," added she, with a penetrating glance on Elise and the Candidate, "if I should not disturb you."

"Certainly not!" was the reply from both parties.

The Candidate needed only the sixteenth of a hint to rush armed with full fervour into the mysteries of his system. Mrs. Gunilla took out a packet of old gold thread, which she set her-

self to unravel, whilst the Candidate coughed and prepared himself.

CHAPTER IV.

MONADS AND NOMADS.

"ALL beings," commenced the Candidate, "have, as their most intrinsic foundation and substance, a simple unity, a soul, a—in a word, a monad."

"A—a what?" asked the Chamberlain's lady, fixing her eyes upon him.

"A monad, or a simple unity," continued he. "The monads have a common resemblance in substance with one another; but in respect of qualities, of power, and size, they are substantially unlike. There are the monads of people; there are human monads, animal monads, vegetable monads; in short, the world is full of monads—they compose the world—"

"Heart's dearest!" interrupted the old lady, in a tone of displeasure, "I don't understand one word of all this! What stuff it is! What are monads?—fill the world, do they?—I see no monads!"

"You see me, dear lady," said Jacobi, "and yourself. You are yourself a monad."

"I a monad!" exclaimed she, in disgust.

"Yes, certainly," replied he, "your Honour just the same as any other living creature—"

"But," again interrupted she, "I must tell you, dear friend, that I am neither a monad nor a creature, but a human being—a sinful human being it is true—but one that God, in any case, created in his own image."

"Yes, certainly, certainly," acceded the Candidate. "I acknowledge a principal monad, from which all other monads emanate."

"What!" exclaimed she, "is our Lord God to be a monad also?"

"He may be so designated," said the Candidate, "on account of oneness, and also to preserve uniformity as to name. For the rest, I believe that the monads, from the beginning, are gifted with a self-sustaining strength, through which they are generated into the corporeal world; that is to say, take a bodily shape, live, act, nay, even strive—that is to say, would remove themselves from one body into another without the immediate influence of the Principal Monad. The monads are in perpetual motion—perpetual change, and always place and arrange themselves according to their power and will. If, now, we regard the world from this point of view, it presents itself to us in the clearest and most excellent manner. In all spheres of life we see how the principal monad assembles all the subject monads around itself as organs and members. Thus are nations and states, arts and sciences, fashioned; thus every man creates his own world, and governs it according to his ability; for there is no such thing as free-will, as people commonly imagine, but the monad in man directs what he shall become, and what in regard to—"

"That I don't believe," interrupted Mrs. Gunilla; "since, if my soul, or monad, as you would call it, had guided me according to its pleasure, it would have led me to do many wicked things; and if our Lord God had not chastised me, and in his mercy directed me to something that was good, it would have gone mad enough with my nomadic soul—that I can tell you."

"But, your Honour," said Jacobi, "I don't deny at all the influence of a principal monad, on the contrary, I acknowledge; and it is precisely this influence upon your monad which—"

"And I assert," exclaimed she, warming, and again interrupting him, "that we should do nothing that was right, if you could establish your nomadic government, instead of the government of our Lord God. What good could I get from your nomads?"

"Monads," said the Candidate, correcting her.

"And supposing your monads," continued Mrs. Gunilla, "do keep in such perpetual movement, and do arrange themselves so properly, what good will that do me in moments of temptation and need? It is far wiser and better that I say and believe that our Lord God will guide us according to his wisdom and good, than if I should believe that a heap of your nomads—"

"Monads, monads!" exclaimed the Candidate.

"Monads or nomads," answered Mrs. Gunilla, "it is all one—be so good as to let my cotton alone—your nomads may be as magnificent and mighty as they please, and they may govern themselves, and may live and strive according to their own wisdom; yet I cannot see how the world, for all that, can be in the least the more regular, or even one little grain the more pleasant to look at. And why are things so bad here? Why, precisely for this very reason, because you good people fancy yourselves such powerful monads, and think so much of your own strength, without being willing to know that you are altogether poor sinners, who ought to beseech our Lord God to govern their poor nomadic souls, in order that they might become a little better. It is precisely such nomadic notions as these that we have to thank for all kind of pettifogging pranks, for all uproars and broken windows. If you had only less of nomads, and more of sensible men in you, one should live in better peace on the earth."

The Candidate was quite confounded; he had never been used to argument like this, and stared at Mrs. Gunilla with open mouth; whilst little Pyrrhus, excited by the warmth of his mistress, leapt upon the table, and barking shrilly seemed disposed to spring at the Candidate's nose. All this appeared so comic, that Elise could no longer keep back the merriment which she had felt during the former part of the dispute, and Jacobi himself accompanied her hearty laugh. Mrs. Gunilla, however, looked very bitter; and the Candidate, nothing daunted, began again.

"But, in the name of all the world," said he, "your Honour will not understand me: we speak only in one sense of observing the world—in a sense which its phenomena can clearly expound themselves. Monadology, rightly understood, does not oppose the ideas of the Christian religion, as I will demonstrate immediately. Objective revelation proves to us exactly that the subject-objective and object-subjective, which—"

"Ah!" said Mrs. Gunilla, throwing herself back, "talk what nonsense you will for me, I know what I know. Nomads may be just what they please for me: but I call a man, a man; I call a cat, a cat, and a flower, a flower; and our Lord God remains to me our Lord God, and no nomad!"

"Monad, monad!" cried the Candidate, in a sort of half-comic despair; "and as for that word, philosophy has as good a right, as any other science, to make use of certain words to express certain ideas."

During the last several minutes suspicious movements had been heard at the parlour door the cause of which now became evident; the children had stolen in behind the Candidate, and now cast beseeching glances towards their mother that she should let all go on unobserved. Petrea and Eva stole in first, carrying between them a heavy pincushion, weighted with lead, five pounds in weight at least. The Candidate was standing, and at the very moment when he was doing his best to defend the rights of philosophy, the leaden cushion was dropped down into his coat-pocket. A motion backwards was perceptible through his whole body, and his coat was tightly pulled down behind. A powerful twitching shewed itself at the corners of his mouth, and a certain stammering might be noticed in his speech, although he stood perfectly still, and appeared to observe nothing; while the little rascals, who had expected a terrible explosion from their well-laid train, stole off to a distance.

All this while, however, there was in the good-hearted scholar such a powerful inclination to laugh, that he hastened to relate an anecdote which should give him the opportunity of doing so. And whether it was the nomads of Mrs. Gunilla which diverted him from his system, or the visit of the little herd of nomads to his pocket, true it is there was an end of his philosophy for that evening. Beyond this, he appeared now to wish by cheerful discourse to entertain Mrs. Gunilla, in which he perfectly succeeded; and so mild and indulgent was he towards her, that Elise began to question with herself whether Mrs. Gunilla's mode of argument were not the best and the most successful.

The children stood not far off, and observed all the actions of Jacobi. "If he goes out, he will feel the cushion," said they. "He will fetch a book! Now he comes—ah!"

The Candidate really went out for a book from his room, but he stepped with the most stoical repose, though with a miserably backward-pulled coat, through the astonished group of children, and left the room.

When he returned, the coat sat quite correctly; the cushion evidently was not there. The astonishment of the children rose to the highest pitch, and there was no end to their conjectures. Louise imagined that there must be a hole in his pocket, through which the pincushion had fallen on the stairs. Petrea, in whose suggestion the joke originated, was quite dismayed about the fate of the cushion.

Never once did it enter into the innocent heads of the children that the Candidate had done all this in order to turn their intended joke on him into a joke on themselves.

"How came you to be acquainted with Mrs. Gunilla W.?" asked Elise from Jacobi when the lady was gone.

"When I was studying in —," replied he, "I rented a small room on the ground floor of the same house where she lived. As I at that time was in very narrow circumstances, I had my dinner from an eating-house near, where all was supplied at the lowest price; but it often was so intolerably bad, that I was obliged to send it back untasted, and endeavour, by a walk in the fresh air instead, to appease my hunger. I had lived thus for some time, and was, as may be imagined, become meagre enough, when Mrs. W., with whom I was not personally acquainted, proposed to me, through her housekeeper, that she should provide me with a dinner at the same

low charge as the eating-house. I was astonished, but thankfully accepted the proposal. I soon discovered, however, that she wished in this way to become my benefactor without its appearing so, and without my thanks being necessary. From this day I lived in actual plenty. But her goodness did not end here. During a severely cold winter, in which I went out in a very thin great-coat, I received quite unexpectedly one trimmed with fur. From whom it came I could not for some time discover, till chance gave me a clue which led me to the Chamberlain's lady. But could I thank her for it? No, she became regularly angry, and drove me away whenever I spoke of my obligation to her."

Tears filled the eyes of Jacobi as he told this, and both Elise's eyes and those of her husband beamed with delight at this relation.

"It is," said Judge Frank, "a proof how much goodness there is in the world, although at a superficial glance one is so disposed to doubt it. What is bad is noised abroad, is echoed back from side to side, and newspapers and social circles find so much to say about it; whilst what is good goes at best, like sunshine, quietly through the world."

CHAPTER V.

DISAGREEABLE NEWS.

THE little quarrel which Mrs. Gunilla had with the Candidate, about monads and nomads, appeared to have displeased neither of them, but rather, on the contrary, to have excited in them a desire for others; and as Elise, who had no great inclination to spend her evenings alone with him, spent frequently to invite Mrs. Gunilla to drink tea with them, it was not long before she and the Candidate were again in hot dispute together. Whenever too it happened that the Assessor also came in, there was a terrible noise among all three. The Candidate spoke his loudest, and leapt about almost beside himself, but was fairly out-talked, because his voice was weak, and because Mrs. Gunilla and the Assessor, who between them two selves never were agreed, leagued themselves nevertheless against him. Jacobi, notwithstanding this, had often the right side of an argument, and bore this overthrow with the best temper in the world. Perhaps he might have lost his temper, however, as well as his voice—he himself declared he should—had he not suddenly abandoned the contest. He vanished almost entirely from the evening circle.

"What has become of our Candidate?" asked Mrs. Gunilla. "I shall be much surprised if some of his monads or nomads have not carried him off bodily! He, he, he!"

Judge Frank and wife also began to question with some anxiety, "What has become of our Candidate?"

Our Candidate belonged to that class of persons who easily win many friends. His cheerful easy temper, his talents and good social qualifications, made him much beloved and sought after, especially in smaller circles. It was here, therefore, as it had been at the University—he was drawn to a jovial little company of good fellows, where, in a variety of ways, they could amuse themselves, and where the cheerful spirit of Jacobi was highly prized. He allowed himself, partly out of good-nature and partly out of his own folly, to be led on by them, and to take part

in a variety of pranks, which, through the influence of some members of the Club, went on from little to more, and our Candidate found himself, before he was aware of what he was about, drawn into a regular debauch—all which operated most disadvantageously upon him—kept him out late at night, and only permitted him to rise late in the morning, and then with headach and disinclination to business.

There was, of course, no lack of good friends to bring these tidings to Judge Frank. He was angry, and Elise was seriously distressed, for she had begun to like Jacobi; and had hoped for so much from his connexion with the children.

"It won't do, it won't do," grumbled Judge Frank. "There shall very soon be an end put to this! A pretty story indeed! I shall tell him that if he —. But, dear child, you yourself are to blame in this affair; you should concern yourself a little about him; you are so *fêre* and distant to him; and what amusement do you provide for him here of an evening? The little quarrels between Mrs. Gunilla and Munter cannot be amusing to him, especially when he is always out-talked by them. It would be a thousand times better for the young man if you would allow him to read aloud to you, even if it were romances, or whatever you would. You should exert your talent for music; it would give yourself pleasure, and between whiles you could talk a little sound reason with him, instead of disputing about things which neither he nor you understand! If you had only begun in that way at first, he would perhaps never have been such a swashbuckler as he is, and now one must get order and good manners back into the house with oversight and trouble. I'll not allow such goings on!—he shall hear about it to-morrow morning! I'll give that pretty youth something which he shall remember!"

"Ah!" said Elise, "don't be too severe, Ernst! Jacobi is good; and if you talk seriously yet kindly to him, I am persuaded it will have the best effect."

Judge Frank made no reply, but walked up and down the room in very ill humour.

"Would you like to hear some news of your neighbour the pasquilla-writer?" asked Assessor Munter, who just then entered with a dark countenance. "He is sick, sick to death of a galloping consumption—he will not write any more pasquillas."

"Who looks after his little girl?" asked Elise; "I see her sometimes running about the street like a wild cat."

"Yes, there's a pretty prospect for her," snorted out the Assessor. "There is a person in the house—one must call her a person whether she be a beast or a devil—who looks after the housekeeping, but robs him and ruins that child. Would you believe it? She and two tall churls that she has about her amuse themselves with terrifying that little girl by dressing themselves up whimsically, and acting the goblins in the twilight. It is more than a miracle if they do not drive her mad!"

"Poor wretch!" exclaimed Judge Frank in rage and abhorrence. "How much destruction of character there is, how much crime, which the arm of the law cannot reach! And that child's father, can he bear that it is so treated?"

"He is wholly governed by that creature—that woman," said Munter; "besides, sick in bed as he now is, he knows but little of what goes on in the house."

"And if he die," asked the judge, "is there nobody who will look after that girl? Is there no relation or friend?"

"Nobody in the world," returned Jeremias. "I have inquired particularly. The bird in the wood is not more defenceless than that child. Poverty there will be in the house; and what little there is, that monster of a housekeeper will soon run through."

"What can one do?" asked the Judge in real anxiety. "Do you know anything, Munter, that one could do?"

"Nothing as yet," returned he; "at present things must take their own course. I counsel nobody to interfere; for he is possessed of the woman, and she is possessed of the devil; and as for the girl, he will have her constantly with him, and lets her give way to all her petulances. But this cannot long endure. In a month, perhaps, he will be dead; and He who sees the falling sparrow will, without doubt, take care of the poor child. At present nobody can save her from the hands of these harpies. Now, good evening! But I could not help coming to tell you this little history, because it lay burning at my heart; and people have the very polite custom of throwing their burdens upon others, in order to lighten themselves. Adieu!"

The Judge was very much disturbed this evening. What he had just heard weighed heavily on his heart.

"It is singular," said he, "how often Mr. N.'s course and mine have clashed. He has talent, but bad moral character; on that account I have opposed his endeavours to get into office, and thus operated against his success. It was natural that he should become my enemy, and I never troubled myself about it; but now I wish—the unhappy man, how miserable he lies there! and that poor, poor child! Ström," said he, calling to his servant, "is the Candidate at home? No, and it is nearly eleven! To-morrow he shall find out where he is at home!"

CHAPTER VI.

HERO-DEEDS.

ON the following morning, as Judge Frank drew aside his window-curtains, the sun, so powerful in its beams and its silence, shone into his chamber, lighting it with its glorious splendour. These sunbeams went directly to his heart.

"Dear Elise," said he, when his wife was awake, "I have a great deal to do to-day. Perhaps it would be better if you would speak with Jacobi, and give him his lecture. Ladies, in such circumstances, have more influence on men than we men can have. Besides this, what can be bent must not be broken. I—in short I fancy you will manage the affair best. Could you not take the children a long walk to-day? It would do both them and you good, and upon the way you would have an excellent opportunity for an explanation. Should this be of no avail, then I will—but I would gladly avoid being angry with him; one has things enough to vex one without that."

The Judge was not the only person in the house whom the sun inspired with thoughts of rambling. The Candidate had promised the children for a long time to take them to a wood, where there were plenty of hazel-bushes, and where they would gather a rich harvest of nuts.

Children have an incomparable memory for such promises; and the little Franks thought that no day could, by any possibility, be more beautiful or more suitable for a great expedition than the present, and therefore, as soon as they discovered that the Candidate and their parents thought the same, their joy rose actually as high as the roof. Brigitta had not hands enough for Petrea and Eva, so did they skip about when she wished to dress them.

Immediately after noon the procession was ready to set forth. Henrik and Louise marched first; next came Eva and Leonore, between whom was Petrea, each one carrying a little basket containing a piece of cake, as provision for their journey. Behind the column of children came the mother, and near her the Candidate, drawing a little wicker carriage, in which sat little Gabriele, looking gravely about with her large brown eyes.

"Little Africa"—so the children called their little dark-eyed neighbour from the Cape—stood at her door as the little Franks tripped forth from theirs. Petrea, with an irresistible desire to make her acquaintance, rushed across the street and offered her a piece of cake which she had in her basket. The little wild creature snatched the piece of cake with violence, showed her row of white teeth, and vanished in the doorway, while Elise seized Petrea's hand, in order to keep her restless spirit in check.

As soon as they had passed the gate of the city the children were permitted full freedom, and they were not much more composed in their demeanour than a set of young calves turned out for the first time into a green meadow. We must even acknowledge that Louise fell into a few excesses, such as jumping over ditches where they were the broadest, and clapping her hands and shouting to frighten away phlegmatical crows. It was not long, however, before she gave up these outbreaks, and turned her mind to a much sadder course; and then, whenever a stiff-necked millifolium or a gaudy hip came in her way, she carefully broke it off, and preserved it in her apron, for the use of the family. Henrik ran back every now and then to the wicker carriage in order to kiss "the baby," and give her the very least flowers he could find. Petrea often stumbled and fell, but always sprang up quickly, and then, unafraid, sped forward on her way again.

The Candidate also, full of joyous animal spirits, began to sing aloud, in a fine tenor voice, the song, "Seats of the Vikings! groves old and hoary," in which the children soon joined their descant, while they marched in time to the song. Elise, who gave herself up to the full enjoyment of the beautiful day and the universal delight, had neither inclination nor wish to interrupt this by any disagreeable explanation; she thought to herself that she would defer it a while.

"Nay, only look, only look, sisters! Henrik, come here!" exclaimed little Petrea, beckoning with the hand, leaping, and almost out of herself for delight, while she looked through the trellis-work of a tall handsome gate into pleasure-grounds which were laid out in the old-fashioned manner, and ornamented with clipped trees. Many little heads soon surmounted Petrea's, and looked with great curiosity through the trellis-gate, and then up came the Candidate, not like a threatening cherub with a flaming sword, but a good angel, who opened the door of this paradise to the enraptured children. This surprise had

been prepared for them by Elise and the Candidate, who had obtained permission from the proprietor of the grounds to take the children through them on their way to the nut-wood.

Here the children found endless subject for admiration and inquiry, nor could either the Candidate or their mother answer all their questions. Before long the hearts of the children were moved at sight of a little leaden Cupid, who stood weeping near a dry fountain.

"Why does he cry?" asked they.

"Probably because the water is all gone," answered the Candidate, smilingly.

Presently again they were enchanted by sight of a Chinese temple, which to their fancy contained all the magnificence in the world—instead of, as was the case, a quantity of fowls; then they were filled with astonishment at trees in the form of pyramids—they never had seen anything so wonderful, so beautiful! But the most wonderful thing was yet to come.

They reached a gloomy part of the grounds. Melancholy sounds, incoherent, yet pleasurable, became audible, accompanied by an uninterrupted plashing of water. The children walked slower and closer together, in a state of excited expectation, and a kind of shuddering curiosity. The melancholy tones and the falling water became more and more distinct, as they found themselves inclosed in a thick fir-wood; presently, however, an opening to the right showed itself, and then, thickly wreathed with a wild growth of plants and heavily-leaved trees, the vault of a grotto revealed itself, within which, and in the distance, stood a large white figure, with aged head, long beard, crooked legs, and goat's feet. To his lips he held a pandean pipe, from which the extraordinary sounds appeared to proceed. Little waterfalls leaped here and there from the rocks around, and then collected themselves at the foot of the statue in a large basin, in which the figure seemed, with a dreamy countenance, to contemplate himself and the leaf-garlanded entrance of the grotto.

The Candidate informed them that this was the wood-god Pan; but what farther information he gave respecting this deity of nature among the ancients, was listened to by nobody but Louise, who however shook her white head over the want of wisdom in the Grecians who could believe on such a god; and by Elise, who longed to discover in the belief of antiquity a god of nature; although we give in our day to such a deity a much truer, and, as we think, a much diviner nature.

The exhibition in the grotto had produced its effect upon all the spectators, great as well as small; but the brain of the little Petrea seemed quite intoxicated, not to say crazed by it. The Wood-god, with his music, his half-animal half-human figure, although only of gypsum, and, as the Candidate declared, the offspring only of a dim fancy, as well as that it was without life or actuality, still remained to her imagination a living existence, as real as wonderful. She could see nothing, think of nothing, but the Wood-god; and the foreboding of a new and wonderful world led her soul with a delicious terror.

In the meantime the candidate conducted Elise by a path, which wound among alders and birches, from the grotto, up the mountain. When they reached the ascent, all was sunny and cheerful; and behold upon a mound, was set out so pleasantly in the sunshine, a little collation of fruit. The Candidate, who had great pleasure in being

the kind-hearted host on such occasions, had provided this little surprise for Elise and the children; and never, indeed, was a surprise more welcome or more joyous. It is the most thankful thing in the world to give pleasure to children; and, moreover, the good-will of the mother is always obtained thereby.

The Candidate spread his cloak upon a green slope under a hedge of roses, on which Elise's favourite flowers were still blooming, as a seat for herself and "the baby," which, now lifted out of the wicker-carriage, had its green silk bonnet taken off, and its golden locks bathed in sunshine. He chose out the best fruit for her and her mother; and then seating himself on the grass near her, played with her, and drove away the flies from her mother with a spray of roses, while the other children ran about at a distance, enjoying, with all the zest of childhood, gooseberries and freedom. The trees rustled with a soft south wind, while the melodious tones of the Wood-god, and the splash of the water, mingled gently with the whispering leaves. It was a delicious time, and its soft influence stole into the soul of Elise. The sun, the scent of the roses, the song of the wood and of the water, the beautiful scene before her, the happy children—all these called up into her breast that summer of the heart, in which all sentiments, all thoughts, are like flowers, and which makes life seem so light and so lovely: she conceived a friendship for that young man who had occasioned it, and whose good heart beamed forth from his eyes, which at one moment were fixed on the blue heavens, and then on her own soft blue eyes, with an expression of devotion and a certain pure earnestness, which she had never observed in him before. Elise felt that she could now undertake the explanation with him; she felt that she could talk with him openly and warmly as a sister, and that the truth would flow from her lips, without wounding him or giving him pain.

Scarcely, however, had she with cordial, though with tremulous voice, begun to speak, when an uneasy movement among the children interrupted her. Some looked in the hedges, some ran about under the trees, and the name "Petrea! Petrea!" was repeated in every variety of tone. The mother looked uneasily around, and the Candidate sprang up to see what was amiss. It was nothing uncommon for Petrea to separate herself from the rest of the children, and, occupied by her own little thoughts, to lag behind; on that account, therefore, nobody had at first troubled themselves because she was not with them at the collation, for they said, "she will soon come." Afterward, Elise and the Candidate were too much occupied by their own thoughts; and the children said as usual, "She'll soon come." But when she did not come, they began to seek for her, and Elise and the Candidate came to their assistance. They ran back to the grotto; they sought and called, but all in vain—Petrea was nowhere to be found! and uneasiness very soon changed itself into actual anxiety.

We ourselves will now conduct the reader to Petrea. So enchanted was she with the Wood-god and his music, that no sooner had she, with the others, begun to climb the hill, than she turned back to the grotto, and there transported by its wonderful world, she was suddenly possessed by a desire to acquaint her father and Brigitta with her having seen the Wood-god. Resolve and action are much more one with children than with women. To be the first who should carry

to the father the important tidings, "Father, I have seen the Wood-god!" was a temptation too strong for Petrea's ambition and craving for sympathy.

She had heard them say that they should rest on the hill; and as her organ of locality was as feeble as her imagination was powerful, she never doubted for a moment of being able to run home and back before they were aware even of her absence. As for the rest, to confess the truth, she thought nothing at all about it; but with a loudly-beating heart, and the words, "Oh, father! we have seen the Wood-god!" on her lips, she made a spring, and rushed forward on the wings of fancy as fast as her little legs would carry her, in a direction exactly the opposite of that which led homeward, and which at the same time removed her from the grotto; never thinking, the poor Petrea! that in this world there are many ways. Before long, however, she found it necessary to stand still, in order to rest herself: delicious odours breathed from the flowers; the birds sang; the heaven was cloudless; and here, where no Cupids nor Chinese temples dazzled her thoughts, the very remembrance of the god Pan vanished from her soul, and instead of it a thought, or more properly speaking a sentiment, took possession of it—a holy and beautiful sentiment, which the mother had early instilled into the hearts of her children. Petrea saw herself solitary, yet at the same time she felt that she was not so; in the deliciousness of the air, in the beauty of nature, she perceived the presence of a good spirit, which she had been taught to call FATHER; and filled, as her heart seemed to be, by a sense of his goodness and affection, which appeared never to have been so sensibly impressed upon her mind as then, her heart felt as if it must dissolve itself in love and happiness. She sank down on the grass, and seemed to be on the way to heaven. But, ah! the way thither is not so easy; and these heavenly foretastes remain only a short time in the souls of children, as well as of grown people.

That which brought Petrea from her heavenly journey back to the earth again, was a squirrel, which sprang directly across her path, and sent her forth immediately in chase of it. To catch such game, and to carry it home, would be indeed in the highest degree a memorable action. "What would Henrik and my sisters say? What would all the city say? Perhaps it will get into the newspapers!—perhaps the king may get to hear it!"—thought Petrea, while, out of herself with ambition and earnestness, she pursued the little squirrel over stock and stone.

Her frock was torn; her hands and feet were bruised; but that was a mere nothing! She felt it not, more particularly—oh, night of felicity!—as she fell down, and at that moment grasped in her trembling hands her little prey. Petrea cried for delight, and shouted to her mother and sisters, who—could not hear her.

"Oh, thou little most loveable creature!" said Petrea, endeavouring at the same time to kiss her little captive, in return for which that most loveable little creature bit her by the chin. Surprised, and sorely smarting from the pain, Petrea began to cry; yet for all that would not let go the squirrel, although the blood flowed from the wound. Petrea ran forward, wondering that she never came to the great trellis-gate, through which she knew she must pass in order to reach home. While she thus wondered with herself, and ran, and struggled with her little untractable

prisoner, she saw a gentleman coming towards her. It never once occurred to her that this could be any other than her father, and almost transported for joy, she exclaimed, "Father, I have seen the Wood-god!"

Greatly astonished to hear himself thus parentally addressed, the young man looked up from the book in which he read, and replied, "Nay, my child, he is gone in that direction," pointing with his finger towards that quarter whence Petrea had come. Imagining at once that he meant the Candidate, Petrea replied with anxiety and a quick foreboding that she was on a wrong track, "Oh, no, it is not he!" and then turned suddenly back again.

She abandoned now all thoughts of running home, and was only desirous of finding those whom she had so thoughtlessly left. She ran back, therefore, with all her speed, the way she had come, till she reached where two roads branched off, and there, unfortunately, taking the wrong one, came into a wild region, where she soon perceived how entirely confused she had become. She no longer knew which way to go, and in despair threw herself into the grass and wept. All her ambition was gone: she let the squirrel run away, and gave herself up to her own comfortless feelings. She thought now of the uneasiness and anxiety of her mother, and wept all the more at the thought of her own folly. But, however, consoling thoughts, before long, chased away these desponding ones. She dried her eyes with her dress—she had lost her pocket handkerchief—and looking around her she saw a quantity of fine raspberries growing in a cleft of the hill. "Raspberries!" exclaimed she, "my mother's favourite berries!" And now we may see our little Petrea scrambling up the cliff with all her might, in order to gather the lovely fruit. She thought that with a bouquet of raspberries in her hand, she could throw herself at the feet of her mother, and pray for forgiveness. So thought she, and tore up the raspberry bushes, and new courage and new hope revived the while in her breast. If, thought she, she elambered only a little higher, could she not discover where her home was? should she not see her mother, father, sisters, nay, the whole world? Certainly. What a bright idea it was!

With one hand full of raspberries, the other assisted her to climb; but, ah! first one foot slipped on the dry smooth grass, and then the other. The left hand could no longer sustain the whole weight of her body; the right would not let go the raspberries. A moment of anguish, a violent effort, and then Petrea rolled down the cliff into a thicket of bushes and nettles, where for the present we will leave her, in order to look after the others.

The anxiety of the mother is not to be described, as after a whole hour spent with Jacobi and Henrik (Louise remained with the baby near the grotto), in seeking and calling for Petrea, all was in vain. There were many ponds in the grounds, and they could not conceal from themselves that it was possible she might have fallen into one. It was a most horrible idea for Elise, and sent an anguish like death into her heart, as she thought of returning in the evening to her husband with one child missing, and that one of his favourites—missing through her own negligence. Death itself seemed to her preferable.

Breathless, and pale as a corpse, she wandered about, and more than once was near sinking to the earth. In vain the Candidate besought her to spare herself; to keep herself quiet, and leave

aid to him. In vain! She heard him not; and restless and unhappy, she sought the child herself. Jacobi was afraid to leave her long alone, and kept wandering near her; while Henrik ran into other parts of the grounds, seeking about and calling.

It was full two hours of fruitless search after the lost one, when the Candidate had again joined the despairing mother, that at the very same moment their glances both fell suddenly on the same object—it was Petrea! She lay in a thicket at the foot of the hill; drops of blood were visible on her face and dress, and a horrible necklace—a yellow-spangled snake!—glittered in the sun around her neck. She lay motionless, and appeared as if sleeping. The mother uttered a faint cry of terror, and would have thrown herself upon her, had not the Candidate withheld her.

"For heaven's sake," said he fervently, and none as death, "be still; nothing perhaps is amiss; but it is the poisonous snake of our woods—the asp! An incautious movement, and both you and Petrea may be lost! No, you must not, your life is too precious—but I promise me to be still, and—"

Elise was scarcely conscious of what she did. "Away! away!" she said, and strove to put Jacobi aside with her weak hands; she herself would have gone, but her knees supported her longer—she staggered, and fell to the ground.

In that same moment the Candidate was beside Petrea, and, seizing the snake by the neck with as much boldness as dexterity, he slung it to a distance. By this motion awakened, Petrea shuddered, opened her sleep-drunken eyes, and, looking around her, exclaimed, "Ah, ah, father! I have seen the Wood-god!"

"God bless thee and thy Wood-god!" cried the delighted Candidate, rejoicing over this indisputable token of life and health; and then, clasping her to his breast, he bore her to her mother. But the mother neither heard nor saw anything; she lay there insensible, and was first recalled to consciousness by Henrik's kisses and tears.

"Is she dead?" whispered she, and looked around with an anxious and bewildered glance.

"No, no! she lives—she is unhurt!" returned Jacobi, who had thrown himself on his knees beside her; while the little Petrea, kneeling likewise, and holding forth the bunch of raspberries, sobbed aloud, and besought her forgiveness.

Light returned to the eyes of the mother; she started up, and, with a cry of inexpressible joy, clasped the recovered child to her breast.

"God be praised and blessed!" cried she, raising her folded hands to heaven; and then silently giving her hand to Jacobi, she looked at him with tears, which expressed what was beyond the power of words.

"Thank God! thank God!" said Jacobi, with deep emotion, pressing Elise's hand to his lips and to his breast. He felt himself happy beyond words.

They now hastened to remove from the dangerous neighbourhood of the snake, after Jacobi and Henrik had given up, at the desire of the mother, the probably ineffectual design of seeking out the poisonous but blameless animal, and killing it on the spot.

All this time little Louise had sat alone by the grotto, endeavouring to comfort her sisters, while she herself wept bitter tears over Petrea, whom she never expected to see again: on that

very account her joy was all the greater and louder, when she saw her carried in the arms of the Candidate; and no sooner did she learn from her mother how he had rescued her from the fangs of death, than she threw her arms round his neck in inexpressible gratitude. All this Petrea heard and saw with the astonishment and curiosity of one who meets with something unheard of; and then, thus seeing the distress which her inconsiderateness had occasioned, she herself melted into such despairing tears, that her mother was obliged to console and cheer her. Of her fall into the thicket Petrea knew no more than that her head had felt hurt, that she could not get up again, had slept, and then dreamed of the Wood-god.

In the meantime it had become so late, that the harvest of nuts was not to be thought of, and as much on the mother's, as on Petrea's account, it was necessary to hasten home. The other children probably would have grieved more over the unfortunate pleasure journey, had they not felt an extraordinary desire to relate at home the remarkable occurrences of the day. New difficulties arose on the return. Petrea—who, besides that she was weary, was bruised and sadly dirtied by her fall—could not walk, and, therefore, it was determined that she must ride in the little carriage, while the Candidate carried Gabrielle. When, however, the little one saw that Jacobi was without gloves, she would neither allow him to carry her nor to take hold of her, and set up the most pitiable cry. Spite of her crying, however, he took up the "little mother's dear," as he called her; and what neither his nor the mother's persuasions could effect was brought about by Henrik's leaps, and springs, and caresses—she was diverted: the tears remained standing half way down her cheeks, in the dimples which were suddenly made by her hearty laughter.

Petrea, after the paroxysm of sorrow and penitence was in some measure abated, began to think herself and her adventures particularly interesting, and sat in her little carriage a very important personage, surrounded by her sisters, who could not sufficiently listen to her relation, and who emulated each other in drawing the little equipage. As for Jacobi, he drew the carriage; he carried the baby, which soon fell asleep on his shoulder; he sang songs; told stories, in order to entertain Elise, who remained long time pale and depressed, from the danger which had threatened her, and the anxiety which she had endured.

At length they reached home. They poured forth their adventures; Brigitta shed tears over her little angel, good Petrea; and the father, from the impulse of his feelings, pressed Jacobi to his heart.

After Petrea's scratches and bruises had been washed with Riga-balsam, the mother permitted the children to have a supper of pancakes and raspberry-cream, in order to console them for the unfortunate expedition.

Petrea wept some bitter tears on the breast of her father over the gentle admonition she received from him; but spite of tears, she soon slept sweetly in his arms.

And the lecture of the Candidate?

"Stay at home with us this evening," said Elise to him, with a kind, beseeching glance.

The Candidate stayed with them.

CHAPTER VII.

BREAKERS.

"STAY at home with us this evening," prayed Elise the next day, and for several other days, and the Candidate stayed.

Never before had he seen Elise so kind, so cordial towards him; never before had she shown him so much attention as now; and this attention, this cordiality, from a lady who, in her intercourse with men, was generally only polite and indifferent, flattered his vanity, at the same time that it penetrated his good heart. All occasion for explanation and lectures vanished, for the Candidate had entirely renounced his dissipated friends and companions, and now nobody could talk more edifying than he on the subject. He agreed so cordially with Elise, that the fleeting champagne of the orgies foamed only for the moment, leaving nothing but emptiness and flatness behind. "For once, nay for a few times," he was of opinion, "such excesses might be harmless, perhaps even refreshing, but often repeated—ah! that would be prejudicial, and demoralizing in the highest degree!"

All this seemed to the little Louise, who had heard it, remarkably well expressed.

Nobody seemed now better pleased at home than Jacobi; he felt himself so well in the regular course of life which he led, and there seemed so much that was genuine and fresh in the occupations and pleasures of those quiet days at home.

In the meantime, it was not long before the weak side of the Candidate began to develop itself even in this new life. Gratitude had, in the first instance, warmed Elise's heart towards him, and then his own real amiability made it so easy to gratify the wish of her husband respecting her behaviour towards him, and thus it soon happened that her intercourse with Jacobi entwined her own existence. In many respects their tastes were similar, especially in their love of music and polite literature, while his youthful enthusiasm gave to her common occupations a higher life and interest. Discussion lost all character of dispute, and became merely an agreeable interchange of thought: it was no longer now of any importance to him to be always right; there was a peculiar kind of pleasure in giving up his opinion to hers. He knew more out of books than she did, but she knew more of life—the mother of books—than he; and on this account she, on her part, proceeded as the older and guiding friend. He felt himself happy from the influence and gentle guidance of an agreeable woman, and became more and more devoted to her from his soul.

Still there was a quietness and a dream about this connexion that made him never forbode danger in it. He loved to be treated as a child by Elise, and he gave therefore free play to his naturally unsophisticated feelings. Her gentle reproofs were a sort of luxury to him; he had a delight in sinning, in order to deserve them; and then, while listening to them, how gladly would he have pressed her dress, or her white and beautiful hand to his lips; there was even a sort of painfully agreeable sensation to him in his not daring to do so. Whenever she approached, and he heard her light footsteps, or when he perceived the soft rose-odour which always accompanied her, it seemed to become indescribably warm around his heart. But that which, above all the rest, was the strongest bond between Jacobi and Elise, was her sufferings. Whenever

nervous pain, or domestic unpleasantness, depressed her spirits; when she bore the not unfrequent ill-humour of her husband with patience, the heart of Jacobi melted in tenderness towards her, and he did all that lay in his power to amuse and divert her thoughts, and even to anticipate her slightest wishes. She could not be insensible to all this—perhaps also it flattered her vanity to observe the power she had over this young man—perhaps even she might willingly deceive herself as to the nature of his sentiments, because she would not disturb the connexion which lent a sweet charm to her life.

"He loves the children," said she; "he is their friend and mine! May he only continue such!"

And certain it is that the children had never been better conducted, never had learned better, never been happier, than they were now, while Jacobi himself developed a more and more happy ability to teach and guide.

Adverse fate barricaded the shore which the vessel is on the point of approaching, by dangerous breakers, and interrupts the bond between the dearest friends, which is just about to be cemented eternally. It was this fate which, at the very time when Jacobi was exhibiting his character in the fairest point of view, occasioned the Judge to exhibit the darker side of his.

Judge Frank belonged to that class of persons who are always in the best humour the more they have to do, and the more active is the life they lead. He was occupied at this very time in undertakings in which his heart was deeply interested, for the improvement of the province. Peculiar circumstances, however, over which he had no control, had for the present impeded him; and all this, which brought on much petty annoyance, occasioned him, likewise, much ill-temper. At home he was of an imperious and quarrelsome, particularly towards his wife; thus placing himself, beside the kind and cheerful Jacobi, in a very disadvantageous light. He felt this, and was displeased with himself, and displeased with his wife, too, because she seemed to pay but little regard to his grumbling; occupying herself instead by her singing-practice with Jacobi. This very singing-practice, too, of which he himself had been the occasion, began to appear to him too much of a thing. Scolding, one might have imagined, he considered more agreeable to the ear; in fact, he was in that edifying state of mind, which excites and angers itself about that which a few good words alone would easily put an end to.

The reading, likewise, which at first he had so zealously recommended, became now to him another cause of vexation. Precisely at this very time he wished to have more of the society of his wife of an evening, and wished her to take more interest in his undertakings and his annoyances; but whenever he came into the parlour, he found them reading or occupied by music; and if these ceased at his entrance, there was still an evident damp on the spirits of all—the entertainment could not proceed; and if, on the contrary, he said "Go on with your music (or reading), go on," and they did so, he was still dissatisfied; and if he did not very soon return to his own room, he walked up and down like a snow-storm.

It was precisely this fate, of which we have just now spoken, which managed it so, that one evening as Judge Frank, the prey of ill-humour, was walking up and down the room, a letter

was put into his hand, at sight of which he burst into an exclamation of joyful surprise. "Nay, that is indeed delightful," said he in a very cheerful voice, as soon as he had read the letter. "Elise! Mrs. S., Emelie is here. She is only just this evening arrived; I must go to her directly. Dear Elise, will you not come with me? It would be polite."

"Oh, it is so late!" said Elise, much less pleased than her husband; "and I fancy it rains. Cannot you go alone to-night? to-morrow morning I will—"

"Well, well, then," said the Judge, suddenly breaking off; and, somewhat offended at her refusal, hastening away.

It was rather late when he returned from his visit, but he was in high spirits. "She is, a most interesting lady," said he; "dear Elise, it certainly would give you great pleasure to know her intimately."

"Ah! I question that," thought Elise.

"She talks," continued he, "of living in the city, I hope we shall decide her to do so."

"I hope not," thought Elise.

"We will do all that we possibly can," said he, "to make her residence here agreeable. I have invited her to dinner to-morrow," added he.

"To-morrow!" exclaimed Elise, half-terrified.

"Yes, to-morrow," answered her husband, peremptorily; "I told her that to-morrow morning you would pay her a visit, but she insists on first coming to you. You need not trouble yourself much about the dinner to-morrow. Emelie will not expect much from an improvised dinner. At all events, it may be just as good as there is any need for, if people will only give themselves a little trouble. I hope Emelie will often come and take up with our simple way of living."

Elise went to rest that night with a depressed heart, and with an indefinite but most unpleasant feeling; thought of the next day's dinner, and then dreamed that her husband's "old flame" had set the house on fire, and robbed the whole family of its shelter.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE IMPROVISED DINNER.

You housewives who know the important meaning of a roast, who know the difficulties which sometimes overwhelm you, especially when you must improvise a family dinner; you who know that notwithstanding all inspiration, both of understanding and inclination,—yet inspiration is necessary to all improvisation,—one cannot inspire either chickens or heathcocks to come flying into the important dish, when the crust is ready to put on it; you housewives who have spent many a long morning in thoughts of cookery and in anguish; you can sympathise in Elise's troubles, as she, on the morning of this important dinner, saw the finger of the clock stand at half-past eleven without having been able to improvise a roast.

It is true that an improvised dinner might do without a roast: this we grant as a general law; but in the case of this particular dinner, we deny it altogether, in proof of which we might easily give the arrangement of the whole dinner, did we not flatter ourselves that we are believed on our bare word. Beyond this, the Judge was particularly fond of a roast, fond of all kinds of

meat, which circumstance increased still more Elise's difficulty; and as if to make difficulty still greater, Elise, on this very day, was remarkably in want of assistants, for her husband had sent out, on his own business, those servants who, on extraordinary occasions, Elise found very good help. The cook, too, was confused to-day in a remarkable manner; the children were in a fermentation; Eva and Leonore quarreled; Petrea tore a hole in her new frock; Henrik broke a bottle and six glasses; the baby cried and screamed for nothing; the clock was on the stroke of twelve, and no roast would come!

Elise was just on the point of falling into despair over roasts, cooks, children, nay, over the whole world, when the door opened, and the words, "your most devoted servant," were spoken out shrilly and joyously, and the widow of the Chamberlain—to Elise she seemed an angel of light from heaven—stood in the room, with her beaming friendly countenance; took out of her monstrous reticule one chicken after another, and laid them upon the table, fixing her eye on Elise, and making with each one a little courtesy to her. Enraptured by the sight, Elise embraced her, hastened into the kitchen with the chickens, and then returning, poured forth her thanks and all her cares to this friend in need.

"Well, well, patience!" exhorted Mrs. Gunilla, kindly and full of cordial sympathy, and somewhat touched by Elise's communication, "Best-beloved, one should not take it so much to heart,—such troubles as these soon pass away, yes, indeed, they soon pass. Now listen and I'll tell you something, 'when need is greatest, help is nearest.' Yes, yes, remember that! As for the chickens, I saw them in a peasant's cart, as I crossed the market, and as I knew what was going on here, I lost no time in buying them and bringing them under my cloak, and I have nearly run myself out of breath in my haste. He, he, he! And so now I must go, for the dear lady must dress herself nicely, and so must I too. Adieu, dear Elise, I wish you the happiness of getting both the dinner and the young folks in order. He, he, he!"

Gunilla went, dinner-time came, and with it the guests and the Judge, who had spent the whole morning in the business of his own office, out of the house.

Emelie, the Colonel's lady, was elegant in the highest degree; looked handsome and distinguished, and almost outdid herself in politeness; but still Elise, spite even of herself, felt stiff and stupid beside her husband's "old flame."

"Oh, that the chickens may be nicely done!" was the incessant master-thought of Elise's soul; and it prevailed over the Pope, the church of St. Peter's, Thorwaldsen, and Pasta, and over every subject on which they talked.

The hour of dinner was come, and yet the dinner kept the company waiting. The Judge, who expected from everybody else the punctuality which he himself practised, began to suffer from what Elise called his "dinner-fever," and threw uneasy glances, first at the dining-room door, and then at his wife, whose situation, it must be confessed, was not a very enviable one. She endeavoured to look quite calm, but whispered something to the little Louise, which sent her speedily out of the room. Elise's entertainment, both that part which was audible, and that which was inaudible, was probably at the moment carried on something after the following fashion:

"It must be inexpressibly pleasant to know

(ah, how unbearably long it is!) "it must be very interesting." (I wish Ernst would fire again on his old flame, and forget dinner :) "Yes, indeed, that was very remarkable." (Now, are those chickens not roasted!) "Poor Spain!" (Now, thank goodness, dinner is ready at last—if the chickens are only well done!)

And now to dinner! A word which brightens all countenances, and enlivens all tempers. Elise began to esteem the Colonel's lady very highly, because she kept up such a lively conversation, and she hoped this would divert attention from any of the dishes which were not particularly successful. The Judge was a polite and agreeable host; and he was particularly fond of dinner-time, when he would willingly have made all men partakers of his good appetite, good humour, and even of his good eating—N. B. If this really was good—but if the contrary happened to be the case, his temper could not well sustain it.

During the dinner Elise saw now and then little clouds come over her husband's brow, but he himself appeared anxious to disperse them, and all went on tolerably till the chickens came. As the Judge, who adhered to all old customs, was cutting them up, he evidently found them tough, whereupon a glance was sent across the table to his wife which went to her heart like the stab of a knife, but no sooner was the first pang over than his reproachful glance aroused a degree of indignation in her which determined her to steel herself against a misfortune which in no case was her fault; she, therefore, grew quite lively and talkative, and never once turned her eyes to her husband, who, angry and silent, sat there with a very hot brow, and the knife sticking still in the fowls.

But, after all, she felt as if she could again breathe freely when the dinner was over, and on that very account longed just to speak one word of reconciliation with her husband; but he now seemed to have only eyes and ears for Emelie, nor was it long before the two fell into a lively and most interesting conversation, which certainly would have given Elise pleasure, and in which she might have taken part, had not a feeling of depression stolen over her, as she fancied she perceived a something cold and depreciating in the manners of her husband towards her. She grew still and paler; all gathered themselves round the brilliant Emelie; even the children seemed enchanted by her. Henrik presented her with a beautiful flower, which he had obtained from Louise by flattery. Petrea seemed to have a passion for her, took a footstool and sat near her, and kissed her hand as soon as she could possess herself of it.

The lady devoted herself exclusively to her old worshipper, cast the beams of her beautiful eyes upon him, and smiled bewitchingly.

"This is a great delight!" thought Elise, as she wiped away a traitorous tear; "but I will keep a good face on it!"

The Candidate, who perceived all this, quickly withdrew from the enchanted circle in which he also had been involved, and taking "the baby" on his knee, began to relate a story which was calculated as much to interest the mother as the child. The children were soon around him: Petrea herself forsook her new flame to listen, and even Elise for the moment was so amused by it that she forgot everything else. That was precisely what Jacobi wanted, but it was not what pleased the Judge. He rose for a moment, in or-

der to hear what it was which had so riveted the attention of his wife.

"I cannot conceive," said he to her in a half-whisper, "how you can take delight in such absurdity; nor do I think it good for the children that they should be crammed with such nonsense!"

At length Emelie rose to take her leave, overwhelming Elise with a flood of polite speeches, which she was obliged to answer as well as she could, and the Judge, who had promised to shew her the lions of the place, accompanied her; on which the rest of the guests dispersed themselves. The elder children accompanied the Candidate to the school-room, to spend an hour in drawing, the younger went to play, and Elise retired to her own chamber.

Poor Elise! she dared not at this moment descend into her own heart; she felt a necessity to abstain from thought; a necessity—entirely to forget herself and the troubling impressions which to-day had overwhelmed her soul. A full hour was before her—an hour of undisturbed repose, and she hastened to her manuscript, in order to busy herself with those rich moments of life which her pen could call up at pleasure, and to forget the poor and weary present—in one word, to loose the lesser in the higher reality. The sense of suffering, of which the little annoyances of life gave her experience, made her alive to the sweet impressions of that beauty and that harmonious state of existence which was so dear to her soul.

She wrote and wrote—her heart was warm—her eyes filled with tears—the words glowed upon her page—life became bright: the moments flew—one half-hour passed after another. Her husband's time came; he was so fond of his tea—had such delight in coming home at this hour to find his wife and his children all assembled round the tea-table in the family room. It very rarely happened that Elise had not all in readiness for him; but now, the striking of seven o'clock roused her suddenly from her writing; she laid down her pen, and was in the act of rising when her husband entered.

A strong expression of displeasure was visible in his countenance, as he saw her occupation,

"You gave us to-day a very bad dinner, Elise," said he, going up to her and speaking with severity; "but when this novel-writing occupies so much of your time, it is no wonder that you neglect your domestic duties: you may just as well trouble yourself as little about everything else as about my wishes."

It would have been easy for Elise to excuse herself, and make all right and straight; but the severe tone in which her husband spoke, and his scornful glance, wounded her deeply.

"You must have patience with me, Ernst," said she; "I am not accustomed to renounce all innocent pleasures; my education, my earlier connexions, have not prepared me for this."

These words excited the Judge greatly, and with a bitter voice and great severity he replied,

"You should have thought about that before you gave me your hand," said he; "before you had descended into so humble and care-full a circle. It is too late now. Now I will——" but he did not finish his sentence, for he himself perceived a storm rising within him, before which he yielded. He went to the door, opened it, and said in a calm voice, yet still with an agitated tone and glance, "I would just tell you that I have taken tickets for the concert to-morrow, if you would wish to go. I hoped to have found

you at the tea-table, but it is just as-desolate and deserted there as if there were the plague.—Don't give yourself any trouble, I shall drink my tea at the club!" and thus saying he banged the door and went.

Elise seated herself—she really could not stand—and hid her face in her trembling hands. "Good heavens! is it come to this? Ernst, Ernst! What words! what looks! And I, wretched being, what have I said?"

Such were Elise's broken and only half-defined thoughts, while tears streamed down her cheeks.

"Words, words, words!" says Hamlet, disparagingly. But God preserve us from the destructive power of words! There are words which can separate hearts sooner than sharp swords—there are words whose sting can remain in the heart through a whole life!

Elise wept long and violently, her whole soul was in excitement.

In moments of violent struggle, bad and good spirits are at hand; they surrounded Elise and spoke to her thus:—

BAD SPIRITS.—"Think on what thou hast given up! think on thy own merits! Recollect the many little acts of injustice which thou hast had to bear, the bitter pains which the severity of thy husband has occasioned thee! Why shouldst thou crawl in the dust? Raise thyself, depressed one! raise thyself, offended wife! think of thy own worth, of thy own rights! Do not allow thyself to be subjected; show some character. Requite that which thou hast endured. Thou also canst annoy; thou also canst punish! Take refuge in thy nerves, in unkindness; make use of thy power, and enjoy the pleasure of revenge!"

GOOD SPIRITS.—"Think on thy wants, on thy faults! Recollect all the patience, all the kindness, all the tenderness, which has been shown thee! Think on thy husband's worth, on his beautiful noble qualities! Think also on life, how short it is; how much unavoidable bitterness it possesses, how much which it is easy either to bear or to chase away; and think how the power of affection can make all things right. Tremble before the chains of selfishness; free thyself from them by a new sacrifice of love, and purify the heaven of home; ascending clouds can easily expand into destructive tempest, or can disperse and leave not a trace in the air. Oh, chase them hence with the powerful breath of love!"

The happiness of a long life depends, not unfrequently, upon which of these invisible counsellors we give ear to. On this it depends whether the gates of heaven or hell shall be opened upon earth to men. Elise listened to the good counsellors; she conversed long with them, and the more pure recollections they sent into her soul, the easier was it for her. The light of love was kindled in her, and that made her clear-sighted in many directions. She saw now what it was right for her to do respecting her novel, and this revelation warmed her heart. She knew also that this was the only one she could ever write, and that her husband should never again miss her from the tea-table, and therefore be obliged to drink his tea at the club (but he should be reconciled with the sinner, the novel); and she would, moreover, prepare a dinner for the Colonel's lady, which should compensate for the unlucky one of this day, and—"Would that Ernst would but come home soon," thought she; "I would endeavour to banish all his displeasure, and make all right between us."

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It was the bathing-day of the children, and the message that the hour of bathing was come interrupted Elise's solitude. She ordered Brigitta to commence her preparations, and when she had somewhat composed herself, and washed away the traces of her tears with rose-water, she herself went down into the chamber.

"What a blessing is water!" thought Elise, at the first view of the scene which presented itself. The soft glowing young forms in the clear warm water, the glimmering of the open fire, the splashing and jubileering of the children in their unspeakable comfort, their innocent sport one with another, in the peaceful little lake of the bath, in which they had no fear of raising stormy waves; nay, even Brigitta's happy face, under her white cap, her lively activity, amid the continual phrases of "best-beloved," "little alabaster arm," "alabaster foot," "lily bosom," and such like, while over the lily-white bosom, and the alabaster arm, she spread soap-foam scarcely less white, or wrapped them in snowy cloths, out of which nothing but little, lively, glowing, merry faces peeped and played with one another at bo-peep—all this united to present a picture full of life and pleasure.

Poor Elise, however, could not fully enjoy it; the thought of what had just occurred, longings for reconciliation with her husband, fear that he might remain out too long, that he might return too much displeased for her easily to make all straight again, these thoughts occupied her mind; yet still she could not help smiling as Gabriele, who had sunk down into the bath alone, exclaimed, almost beside herself for fright, "I am drowning! I am drowning!" In order to reassure her, her mother stretched out her white hands to her, and under their protection she laughed and splashed about like a little fish in water.

A shower of flowers streamed suddenly over both mother and child, and Gabriele screamed aloud for joy, and stretched forth her little arms to catch gilly-flowers, roses, and carnations, which fell upon and around her. Elise turned herself round in surprise, and her surprise changed itself into the most delightful sensation of joy, as the lips of her husband were pressed to her forehead.

"Ah, you!" exclaimed Elise, and threw her arms round his neck, and caressingly stroked his cheek.

"I shall get wet through with all this," said he laughing, yet without leaving the bath, nay, he even stooped down his head to little Gabriele, kissed her, and allowed her to splash him with water.

"Thank God! all is right again! and perhaps it will be best to take no farther notice of this unpleasant affair!" thought she, and prepared to follow her husband into the parlour.

The Judge had, probably, during his bad tea at the club, listened to the invisible speakers as well as his wife, the consequence whereof was his visit to the bathing-room, and the shower of flowers from the nosegay he had brought with him for her, and the kiss of reconciliation which effaced every thoughtless and wounding word. He felt now quite pleased that everything was as it should be, and that the gentle and yielding temper of his wife would require nothing further. But, perhaps, on that very account, he was dissatisfied with himself, and, therefore, felt a necessity to pronounce one word—one word, which it is so hard for the lips of a man to pronounce.

yet, which Ernst Frank was too manly, too firm, to shun.

When, therefore, his wife entered, he offered her his hand; "Forgive me, Elise," said he, with the deepest feeling; "I have behaved severely, nay, absurdly to-day!"

"Oh, forgive me, Ernst!" said Elise, deeply affected, whilst she pressed his hand to her heart.

Accused be all disturbers of the peace in this world! Such a one entered at that moment, and undid that which would otherwise have bound them so closely to each other. It was a messenger from the Colonel's lady with a note, together with a book for the Judge, and two little bottles of select Eau de rose for Elise, "of which, I know," said the note, "she is very fond."

The Judge's cheek grew crimson as he read the note, which he did not show to his wife.

"An extremely polite and interesting person," said he, "I will immediately answer it."

"Ernst," said Elise, "should we not invite her to dinner to-morrow? I thought of something very nice, which is sure to succeed; then we go altogether to the concert, and afterwards she might sup with us."

"Now that is good a idea, and thank you for it, my dear Elise," said he, extremely pleased.

Yes, if the Colonel's lady had not been there,—if the Candidate had not been there,—and if there had been no *if* in the case, all might have gone on quite smoothly. But it was quite otherwise.

CHAPTER IX.

ONE SWALLOW MAKES NO SUMMER.

Too many chaotic elements had collected together in the family of the Franks, for one sun-gleam to dissipate. Even the married pair did not clearly understand their own actions.

The Judge, truly, was too much enchanted by his former beloved-one; and the beautiful Emelie did all that was in her power to enslave again her early adorer.

Judge Frank, who would have been as cold and proud as possible if he had been assailed by coarse and direct flattery, was yet by no means steeled against the refined and almost imperceptible flattery of Emelie, who, with all her peculiar gifts of soul and understanding, made herself subordinate to him, in order to be enlightened and instructed by him.

"An extraordinarily amiable and interesting lady," thought he still with greater animation, although he seldom asserted so much; and exactly in the proportion in which he found Emelie interesting, it was natural that he should find Elise less so, especially as he found in Emelie precisely those very qualities, the want of which he had so much regretted in his wife: namely, an interest in his activity as a citizen, and in general for the objects connected with which he occupied himself in the liveliest manner.

Elise, on her part, was neither calmer nor clearer as to the nature of her actions than her husband. The connexion between him and Emelie was painful to her; and she felt a sort of consolation from the devotion of Jacobi, even when it was beginning to assume that passionate character which made her seriously uneasy.

A letter, which she wrote to her sister about this time, exhibits her state of feeling:

It is long since I wrote to you, Cecilia—I hardly know why; I hardly know, indeed, my

own feelings—all is so unquiet, so undefined. I wish it were clear!

"Do you know she is very lovely, this old flame of my husband's, and very brilliant. I fancy I am jealous of her. Last evening I went out to a supper-party—the first for several years. I dressed myself with great care, for I wished to please Ernst, and had flowers in my hair. I was greatly satisfied with my appearance when I went. My husband was to come later. I found Emelie already there; she was beautiful, and looked most elegant. We were seated together; a looking-glass was before us, on which I threw stolen glances, and saw—a shadow! I thought at first it was some illusion, and looked again; but again it revealed unmercifully to me a pale ghost beside the beautiful and dazzling Emelie. 'It is all over, irremediably over,' thought I, 'with my youth and my bloom!' But if my husband and children only can love me, I can then resign youth and beauty."

"But again I felt compelled to look at the shadow in the glass, and grew quite melancholy. Emelie also cast glances at the mirror, and drew comparisons, but with feelings far different from mine. Then came Ernst, and I saw that he too made comparisons between us.

"He was, all this evening, very much occupied with Emelie. I felt unwell and weak; I longed so to support myself on his arm; but he did not come near me the whole time: perhaps he imagined I was out of humour—perhaps I looked so. Ah! I returned home before supper, and he remained. As I drove home through those deserted streets in the wretched hackney-coach, a sense of misery came over my heart such as I cannot describe; many a bitter thought was awoke within me, before which I trembled.

"At the door of my own home I met Jacobi; he had sate up for me, and wished to tell me something amusing about my children. He seemed to have foreboded my feelings this evening. My favourite fruit, which he had provided for me, should have refreshed me. His friendship and his devotion cheer me. There is something so beautiful in feeling one-self beloved.

"Every new emotion, every new connexion, among men, has its danger, its temptation; the most beautiful, the most noble, may have their dangerous tendency. O! how is this to be prevented without a separation?—how is the poison to be avoided without deadening the sting? O Cecilia! at this moment I need a friend; I need you, to whom I could turn, and from whom, in these disquieting circumstances, I in my weakness could derive light and strength. I am discontented with myself; I am discontented with—Ah! he alone it is who, if he would, could make all right!

* * * * *

"Oh, Cecilia, this is a mist-enveloped hour of my life!—does it announce day or night? My glance is dark; I see the path no longer! But I will resign myself into the hand of Him who said, 'let there be light.'

* * * * *

"Thank God, all is now better and clearer! In a few hours this day will be over;—I long for it!

"To-day we have a children's dance at our house. Emelie will be here also. There is not a good understanding between us two. She is too cold for me, too witty, and too—but I will do my best to be a good hostess; and when the

day is ended, I will look at my sleeping boy, and make myself happy over my children."

CHAPTER X.

THE END OF THE DAY.

EVENING came, and with it lights and guests. A strong, self-sacrificing amiability governed Elise's manner this evening. She was almost cordial towards Emelie; cared for the comfort of every one, played the piano for the children's dance, and appeared to exist only in order to serve others. The beautiful Emelie, on the contrary, thought of herself; was livelier and more brilliant than ever, and, as usual, assembled all the gentlemen around her; she turned her conversation from politics to literature, and then spoke of theatricals, characterizing, in the most animated and sarcastic manner, the dramatic manufactory of the Scribe-Melleville school.

"For the rest," added she, "the stage acts very prudently and sensibly in letting the curtain fall the moment the hero and heroine approach the altar; novels do the same, and that, also, with good reason, otherwise nobody would be able to read them."

"How so?" asked the Judge with great earnestness.

"Because," answered Emelie, "the illusion of life is extinguished on the other side of this golden moment, and reality steps forward then in all its heaviness and nakedness. Look at a young couple in the glowing morning of their union, how warm love is then; how it penetrates and beautifies every thing; how it glows and speaks in glance and word, and agreeable action; how its glory changes the whole of life into poetry! 'Thou, thou!' is the one thought of the young people then. But observe the same couple a few years later—'I, I!' and 'that which will give me pleasure,' is the one thought then. The adoring, all-resigning lover is then become the authoritative husband, according to whose law everybody must regulate themselves, and to whom everybody must attend. And the loving, all-sacrificing bride, she is become the unwieldy and care-burdened housewife, who talks of nothing but trouble, bad sausages, and negligent maid-servants. And what are *elle-à-elle* communications between these two? 'How, my dear! is the butter really used up already? Why, I gave you money only the other day for butter? You really must look better after things, and see what the cook does with the butter; I will not allow such extravagance in the house even if you will!' or 'Indeed, my love, I and the children must have new over-dresses. Little Peter's coat is worn out, and little Paul has grown out of his; and my old cloak cannot last to eternity!' People," continued the sarcastic Emelie, "may thank their stars, too, if out of such interesting communications as these no hateful quarrels arise; and if, in the happy repose of their homes, harmless yawnings have only taken place of the kisses which have left it. Contracted circumstances, the miserableness and difficulties of housekeeping, destroy the happiness of marriage, even as the worm destroys the flower, bringing bitterness and sourness into the temper; and though the married pair may continue to the very day of their death to address each other as 'My dear child,' yet, very often, *in petto*, it is

'My sour child.' Yet, after all, this is nothing, in fact, but what is perfectly natural; and, in this respect, marriage only follows the eternal law of nature in all earthly existence. Every form of life carries in itself decay and dissolution—a poisonous snake-king* has forced itself to the root of the world."

Several of the listeners, and among them the Candidate, had laughed loudly at Emelie's descriptions; but the Judge had not once moved his lips, and replied, when she had done, with an earnestness that confounded even her satire.

"If all this were true, Emelie," said he, "then were life, even in its best point of view, good for nothing; and with justice might it indeed be called an illusion. But it is not so; and you have only described marriage in its lowest, and not either in its best or its truest sense. I do not deny the difficulties which exist in this, as in every other circumstance of life; but I am confident that they may and must be overcome: and this will be done if the married pair bring only right intentions into the house. Then may want and care, disturbing, nay even bitter hours may come, but they will also go; and the bonds of love and truth will be consolation, nay, even will give strength. You have spoken, Emelie, of death and separation as the end of the drama of life; you have forgotten the awaking again, and the second youth, of which the ancient Walat sings. Married life, like all life, has such a second youth; yes, indeed, a progressive one, because it has its foundation in the life which is eternal; and every contest won, every danger passed through, every pain endured, change themselves into blessing on home and on the married pair, who have thus obtained better knowledge, and who are thus more closely united."

He spoke with unusual warmth, and not without emotion, and his expressive glance sought and dwelt upon his wife, who had approached, unobserved, and who had listened to Emelie's bitter satire with stinging pain, because she knew that there was a degree of truth in it.

But as her husband spoke, she felt that he perceived the whole and full truth, and her heart beat freer and stronger, and all at once a clearness was in her soul. With her head bent forward, she gazed on him with a glance of tenderness and confidence, forgetting herself, and listening with fervour to every word which he uttered. In this very moment their eyes met, and there was much, inexpressibly much, in their glance; a clear crimson of delight flushed her cheek, and made her beautiful. The gentle happiness which now animated her being, together with her lovely figure, her graceful movements, and the purity of her brow, made her far more fascinating than her lovely rival. Her husband followed her with his eyes, as, kindly and attentively she busied herself among her guests, or with the little Gabriele in her arms, mingled in the children's dance, for which Evelina's foster daughters were playing a four-handed piece. He had suddenly cooled towards his "old flame," nor was he at all warmed again by the sharp tone with which the little caressing Petrea was reproved for being too obtrusive.

"Our Louise in time will dance very well," remarked the Judge to his wife, as he noticed

* According to the Northern mythology, Nödhög, the snake-king, lives in Niflheim, the nether world.

† A kind of Northern sibyl or prophetess.

with great pleasure the little *glissades* and *chassés* of his daughter, whom Miss Gabriel Sternhök twirled round, and with whom he conversed with great gravity, and a certain knightly politeness.

In the meantime Mrs. Gunilla was instructing Emelie on the manners and character of the French; and Emelie, whose countenance since the discussion of the marriage question had worn a bitter expression, endeavoured with a tolerably sharp tone to make her superior information felt, and in return was mown down, as it were, at one stroke by Mrs. Gunilla, who—had never been in France.

The Candidate followed Elise everywhere with glances of devotion, and appeared this evening perfectly enchanted by her amiability.

"Fie, for shame!—to take all the confections to yourself!" moralized the little Louise to a young guest, a fat, quiet boy, who took the confections and the reproof with the same stoical indifference. Louise cast a look of high indignation upon him, and then gave her share of sweetmeats to a little girl, who complained she had none.

Supper same, and Emelie, whose eyes flashed unusual fire, seemed to wish fervently to win back that regard which she, perhaps, feared to have lost already, and with her playful and witty conversation electrified the whole company. Jacobi, who was excited in no ordinary manner, drank one glass of wine after another, talked and laughed very loud, and looked between whiles upon Elise with glances which expressed his sentiments in no doubtful manner. These glances were not the first of the kind which the quick eyes of Elise's rival observed.

"That young man," said she, in a low but significant whisper to the Judge, and with a glance on Jacobi, "seems to be very charming; he has really remarkably attractive talents—he is nearly related to Elise, of course."

"No," returned he, looking at her rather surprised; "but he has been for nearly three months a member of our family."

"Indeed!" said she, in purposely emphatic and grave manner; "I should have thought—but as for that," added she, in an evidently careless tone—"if Elise be really so kind and so amiable to everybody who is with her daily as she is to him, it must be very difficult not to love her."

The Judge felt the sting of the viper, and with a glance which flashed a noble indignation, he replied to his beautiful neighbour, "You are right, Emelie; I know no woman who deserves more love or esteem than she!"

Emelie bit her lip and grew pale; and she would assuredly have grown yet paler, could she only have understood the sentiment which she had awakened in the breast of her former admirer.

Ernst Frank had a keen sense of moral meanness, and in his estimation no intellectual power could compensate for it. He clearly understood her intentions and despised her for them. In his eyes, at this moment, she was hateful. In the mean time his composure was destroyed. He looked on Jacobi, and observed his glances and his feelings towards his wife; he looked on her, and saw that she was uneasy and avoided his eye.

A horrible spasmodic feeling thrilled through his soul; in order to conceal which he became more than usually animated, yet there was a

something bitter, a something keenly sarcastic in his words, which still, on account of the general gaiety, remained unobserved by most.

Never before was Assessor Munter so cheerful, so comically cross with all mankind. Mr. Gunilla and he seemed quite desperate against each other. The company rose from the supper-table in full strife, and adjourned to the dancing-room.

"Music, in heaven's name! music!" exclaimed the Assessor, with a gesture of despair, and Elise and the Colonel's lady hastened to the piano. It was a pleasant thought, after the screaming of that rough voice had been heard, to play one of Blangini's beautiful night-pieces, which seem to have been inspired by the Italian heaven, and which awaken in the soul of the hearer a vision of those summer nights, with their flowery meadows, of their love, of their music, and of all their unspeakable delights.

"Un' eterna constanza in amor," were the words which, repeated several times with the most bewitching modulations, concluded the song.

"Un' eterna constanza in amor!" repeated the Candidate, softly and passionately pressing his hand to his heart, as he followed Elise to a window, whither she had gone to gather a rose for her rival. As Elise's hand touched the rose, the lips of Jacobi touched her hand.

Emelie sang another song, which delighted the company extremely; but Ernst Frank stood silent and gloomy the while. Words had been spoken this evening which aroused his slumbering perception; and after what he had just seen between Jacobi and his wife, he felt as if the earth were trembling under his feet, as if he literally gasped for breath. A tempest was aroused in his breast; and at the same moment turning his eyes, he encountered those of another person, which were riveted upon him with a questioning, penetrating expression. They were those of the Assessor. Such a glance as that from any other person had been poison to the temper of Frank, but from Jeremias Munter it operated quite otherwise; and as shortly afterwards he saw his friend writing something on a strip of paper, he went to him, and looking over his shoulder, read these words:

"Why regardest thou the mote in thy brother's eye, yet seest not the beam in thine own eye?"

"Is this meant for me?" asked he in a low but excited voice.

"Yes," was the direct reply.

The Judge took the paper, and concealed it in his breast.

He was pale and silent, and began to examine himself. The company broke up; he had promised Emelie to accompany her home; but now, while she, full of animation, jested with several gentlemen, and while the servant drew on her fur-shoes, he stood silent and cold beside her as a pillar of ice. Mrs. Gunilla and the Assessor quarreled till the last moment. Whilst all this was going on, Elise went quietly to Jacobi, who stood somewhat apart, and said to him in a low voice, "I wish to speak with you when they are all gone; I will wait for you in the parlour." Jacobi bowed; a burning crimson flashed to his cheek; the Judge threw a penetrating glance upon them, and passed his hand over his pale countenance.

"It gives me great pleasure," cried Mrs. Gunilla, speaking shrilly and staccato; "it gives

me great pleasure to see my fellow-creatures, and it gives me great pleasure if they will see me. If they are not always agreeable, why, I am not always agreeable myself! Heart's-dearest! in this world one must have patience one with another, and not be everlastingly requiring and demanding from others. For my part, I am satisfied with the world, and with my own fellow-creatures, as God has made them. I cannot endure that people should be perpetually blaming and criticising, and making sour faces, and cutting their jokes on every thing, and saying, 'I will not have this!' and 'I will not have that!' and 'I will not have it so! It is folly; it is unbearable; it is wearisome; it is stupid!' precisely as if they themselves only were endurable, agreeable, and clever! No, I have learned better manners than that. It is true that I have no genius, nor learning, nor talents, as so many people in our day lay claim to, but I have learned to govern myself."

During this moral lecture, and endeavouring all the time to overpower it, the Assessor exclaimed, "And can you derive the least pleasure from your horrible social life? No, that you cannot! What is social life, but a strift to get into the world in order to discover that the world is unbearable? but a scheming and labouring to get invited, to be offended and put out of sorts if not invited; and if invited, to complain of weariness and vexation? Thus people bring a mass of folks together, and wish them—at Jericho! and all this strift only to get poorer, more out of humour, more out of health; in one word, to get the exact position, *vis-à-vis*, of happiness! See there! Adieu, Adieu! When the ladies take leave, they never have done."

"There is not one single word of truth in all that you have said," was the last but laughing salutation of Mrs. Gunilla to the Assessor, as, accompanied by the Candidate, she left the door. The Judge, too, was gone; and Elise left alone, betook herself to the parlour.

Suddenly quick steps were heard behind her—she thought "Jacobi!"—turned round and saw her husband; but never before had she seen him looking as then; there was an excitement, an agitation, in his countenance that terrified her. He threw his arm violently round her waist, riveted his eyes upon her with a glance that seemed as if it would penetrate into her inmost soul.

"Ernst, be calm!" whispered she, deeply moved by his state of mind, the cause of which she imagined. He seized her hand and pressed it to his forehead—it was damp and cold; the next moment he was gone.

We will now return to the Candidate.

Wine and love, and excited expectation, had so inflamed the imagination of the young man, that he hardly knew what he did—whether he walked, or whether he flew; and more than once, in descending the stairs, had he nearly precipitated Mrs. Gunilla, who exclaimed with kindness, but some little astonishment, "God preserve me! I cannot imagine, heart's-dearest, how either you or I walk to-night! See, now again, all's going mad! No, I thank you, I'll take care of myself. I think I can go safe by myself. I can hold by—"

"A thousand times pardon," interrupted the Candidate, whilst he pressed Mrs. Gunilla's arm tightly; "it is all my fault. But now we will go safely and magnificently; I was a little dizzy!"

"Dizzy!" repeated she. "Heart's-dearest, we should take care on that very account; one should take care of one's head as well as one's heart, or every thing will fare worse than it has now fared with us! He, he, he! But listen to me, my friend," said Mrs. Gunilla, suddenly becoming very grave: "I will tell you one thing, and that is—"

"Your Honour, pardon me," interrupted he, "but I think—I feel rather unwell—I—there, now we are at your door! Pardon me!" and the Candidate tumbled upstairs again.

In the hall of the Franks' dwelling, he drew breath. The thought of the mysterious meeting with Elise filled him at the same time with joy and uneasiness. He could not collect his bewildered thoughts, and with a wildly-beating heart went into the room where Elise awaited him.

As soon as he saw her white lovely figure standing in the magical lamplight, his soul became intoxicated, and he was just about to throw himself at her feet, when Elise, hastily and with dignity, drew back a few paces.

"Listen to me, Jacobi," said she, with trembling but earnest voice.

"Listen to you!" said he, passionately—"Oh, that I might listen to you for ever!—Oh, that I—"

"Silence!" interrupted Elise, with a severity very unusual to her; "not one word more of this kind, or our conversation is at an end, and we are separated for ever!"

"Good heavens!" exclaimed Jacobi, "what have—"

"I beseech you, listen to me!" continued Elise; "tell me, Jacobi, have I given you occasion to think thus lightly of me?"

Jacobi started. "What a question!" said he, stammering and pale.

"Nevertheless," continued Elise, with emotion, "I must have done so; your behaviour to me this evening has proved it. Could you think, Jacobi, that I, a wife, the mother of many children, could permit the sentiment which you have been so thoughtless as to avow this evening? could you imagine that it would not occasion me great uneasiness and pain? Indeed, it is so, Jacobi; I fear that you have gone sadly wrong; and if I myself, through any want of circumspection in my conduct, have assisted thereto, may God forgive me! You have punished me for it, Jacobi—have punished me for the regard I have felt and shown to you; and if I now must break a connexion, which I hoped would gladden my life, it is your own fault. Only one more such glance—one more such declaration, as you have made this evening, and you must remove from this house."

The crimson of shame and indignation burned on Jacobi's cheek. "In truth," said he, "I have not deserved such severity."

"Ah! examine yourself, Jacobi," said she, "and you will judge yourself more severely than I have done. You say you love me, Jacobi, and you do not dread to destroy the peace and happiness of my life. Already, perhaps, are poisonous tongues in activity against me. I have seen this evening glances directed upon me and upon you, which were not mild; and thoughts and feelings are awakened in my husband's soul, which never ought to have been awakened there. You have disturbed the peace of a house, into which you were received with friendship and confidence. But I know," continued she, sadly,

"at you have not intended anything criminal; no bad intentions have guided your behaviour; folly only has led you to treat so lightly that relationship which is the holiest on earth. You have not reflected seriously enough on your life, or your duty and your situation, in this family."

Jacobi covered his face with his hands, and a strong emotion agitated him.

"And Ernst," again began Elise, with warmth and yet greater feeling, "what an excellent husband he is—scarcely has he his equal—Jacobi, the saviour of my child—my young friend! I would not have spoken thus to you if I had not had great faith on your better—your nobler self; if I had not hoped to have won a friend in you—a friend for my whole life, for myself and Ernst. Oh, Jacobi, listen to my prayer! you are thrown among people who are willing from their very hearts to be your friends! Act so that we may love and highly esteem you; and do not change into grief that hearty good will which we both feel for you! Combat against, nay, banish from your heart, every foolish sentiment which you, for a moment, have cherished for me. Consider me as a sister—as a mother!—Yes," continued she, pausing over this word, and half prophetically, "perhaps you may even yet call me mother; and if you will show me love and faith, Jacobi, as you have said, I will accept it—from my son! O, Jacobi! if you would deserve my blessing, and my eternal gratitude, be a faithful friend, a good instructor of my boy, my Henrik! Your talents as a teacher are of no common kind. Your heart is good—your understanding is capable of the noblest cultivation—your path is open before you to all that makes man most estimable and most amiable. Oh! turn not away from it, Jacobi—tread this path with Ernst—"

"Say not another word!" exclaimed Jacobi. "Oh, I see all! forgive me, angelic Elise! I will do all, everything, in order to deserve your esteem and friendship. You have penetrated my heart—you have changed it. I shall become a better man. But tell me that you forgive me—that you can be my friend, and that you will!"

Jacobi, in the height of his excitement, had thrown himself on his knee before her; Elise also was deeply affected; tears streamed from her eyes, while she extended her hand to him, and bending over him said, from the very depths of her heart, "Your friend for ever!"

Calmly, and with cheerful countenances, both raised themselves; but an involuntary shudder passed through her as she saw her husband standing in the room, with a pale and stern countenance.

Jacobi went towards him: "Judge Frank," said he, with a firm but humble voice, "you behold here a—"

"Silence, Jacobi!" interrupted Elise, quickly; "you need not blush on account of your bended knee, nor is any explanation needful. It is not, is it, Ernst?" continued she, with the undaunted freshness of innocence: "you desire no explanation; you believe me when I say, that Jacobi now, more than ever, deserves your friendship. A bond is formed between us three, which, as I hope, nothing will disturb, and no poisonous tongue censure. You believe me, Ernst?"

"Yes," said he, giving her his hand; "if I could not, then—" he did not finish the sentence, but fixed his eyes with a stern expression immovably on her. "I will speak with you," said he, after a moment, and in a calmer voice. "Good night, Mr. Jacobi."

Jacobi bowed, withdrew a few steps, and then returned: "Judge Frank," said he, in a voice which showed the excitement of his feelings, "give me your hand; I will deserve your friendship."

The outstretched hand was grasped firmly and powerfully, and Jacobi left the room in haste.

"Come here, Elise," said the Judge with warmth, leading his wife to the sofa, and enclosing her in his arms. "Speak to me! Tell me, has anything in my behaviour of late turned your heart from me?"

Elise's head sunk upon the breast of her husband, and she was silent. "Ah, Ernst!" said she at length, with a painful sigh, "I also am dissatisfied with myself. But," added she, more cheerfully, "when I lean myself on you thus, when I hear your heart beating, and know what is within that heart, then, Ernst, I feel how I love—how I believe on you! Then I reproach myself with being so weak, so unthankful, so ready to take offence! Oh, Ernst! love me, look on me always as now, then life will be bright to me; then shall I have strength to overcome all—even my own weakness; then I shall feel that only a cloud, only a shadow of mist, and no reality can come between us. But now all is vanished; now I can lay open to you all the innermost loopholes of my heart—can tell you all my weaknesses—"

"Be still, be still now," said the Judge, with a bright and affectionate look, and laying his hand on her mouth. "I have more failings than you; but I am awake now. Weep not, Elise; let me kiss away your tears! Do you not feel, as I do now, that all is right? Do we not believe in the Eternal Good, and do we not believe in each other? Let us forgive and forget, and have peace together. Some time, when the error of this time has in some measure passed from our remembrance, we will talk it over, and wonder how it ever came between us. Now, all is so bright between us, and we both of us see our way clearly. Our errors will serve us for warnings. Wherefore do we live in the world, unless to become better? Look at me, Elise. Are you friendly towards me? Can you have confidence in me?"

"I can! I have!" said she; "there is not a grain of dust any longer between us."

"Then we are one!" said he, with a joyful voice. "Let us, then, in God's name, go thus together through life. What he has united, let no man, no accident, nothing in this world, separate!"

Night came; but light had arisen in the breast both of husband and wife.

The fruit of disunion is commonly thorns and thistles, but it may likewise bear seed for the granary of heaven.

CHAPTER XI.

JACOBI.

WHEN Jacobi entered his room, he found a letter lying on the table near his bed. He recognised the handwriting as that of Judge Frank, and quickly opened it. A bank-note, of considerable value, fell out; and the letter contained the following words:

"You are indebted to several persons in the city, Jacobi, with whom I wish, for your own sake, that you should have as little to do as

possible. Within, you will find the means of satisfying their demands. Receive it as from a paternal friend, who sincerely wishes you to regard him as such, and who embraces with pleasure an opportunity of making an acknowledgment to the friend and instructor of his children. To the preserver of my child I shall always remain indebted; but should you desire anything, or need anything, do not apply to any other than

"Your friend,
"E. FRANK."

"He! and he, too?" exclaimed Jacobi, deeply agitated. "O, the kind, noble, excellent man! And I—I shall, I will become worthy of him! From this day forward I am another person!"

He pressed the letter to his breast, and looked up to the star-lighted heaven with silent but fervent vows.

CHAPTER XII.

TIME GOES.

LIFE has its moments of strength and bloom; its bright moments of inspiration, in which the human artist, the painter of earthly life, seizes on, and utters what is purest, most beautiful and divine. If, in our human life, we acted only then; if then all sacrifices were made, all victories won, there would be but little difficulty in life. But the difficult part is to preserve, through a long course of years, the flame which has been kindled by inspiration only; to preserve it while the storms come and go, while the everlasting dust-rain of the moment falls and falls; to preserve it still and uniform, amid the unvarying changing of unvaried days and nights. To do this, strength from above is required; repeated draughts from the fountain of inspiration, both for the great and the small—for all labourers on earth.

It was the good fortune of Ernst and Elise that they knew this; and knew, also, how to make it available to them. On this account they succeeded more and more in conquering their natural failings; on this account they came nearer to each other by every little step, which in itself is so unobservable, but which yet, at the same time, twines so firmly and lovingly together the human heart and life, and which may be contained in the rubric—*regard for mutual inclinations, regard for mutual interests.*

Through this new-born intimacy of heart, this strengthening and pure affection, Elise assumed a secure and noble standing with regard to Jacobi. Her heart was vanquished by no weakness, even when she saw suffering expressed in his youthful countenance; nay, she remained firm, even when she saw that his health was giving way, and only besought her husband to name an earlier day for his and Henrik's departure, in which her husband's wish accorded with her own. She found him now by her side like a good angel, gentle, yet strong. No wonder was it, therefore, that, to try him, Elise went forward successfully; no wonder was it, therefore, that from the firm conduct of her husband, and from the contemplation of the good under-

standing which existed between them, the whispered blame, which had already begun to get abroad at their expense, died of itself, like a flame wanting nourishment.

Of Judge Frank's "old flame," which Elise had feared so much, we must relate how that she found herself so wounded, and so cooled likewise, by the ice-cold behaviour of her former adorer, that she quickly left the city, having abandoned all thoughts of settling there.

"Life there, would be too uniform for me, would possess too little interest," said she, yawning, to the Judge, who was warmly counselling her return either to France or Italy.

"In our good North we must find that which can give interest and enjoyment to life in ourselves and our own means,—from our families, from our own breaths."

"She is extremely beautiful and interesting," said Elise, with a kindly feeling towards her when she was gone. The Judge made no reply, nor was he ever heard to speak again of this his former beloved one.

Days went by. The Judge had much to do. Elise occupied herself with her little girls, and the Candidate with Henrik and his own studies.

The children grew like asparagus in June, and their father rejoiced over them. "Little Louise will grow over all our heads," prophesied he many a time; and when he heard Eva's playing "*Malbrook s'en va-t-en guerre*," on the piano, his musical sense awoke, and he would observe to his wife, "Has not Eva already a great deal of feeling in music?"

The evenings, on which all the members of the family assembled, assumed constantly a livelier and more comfortable character for every one; often they played and danced with the children.

The children! What a world of pleasure and pain, do they not bring with them into a house! of a truth all is not of as rosy a hue as their cheeks. Elise discovered that in her children, which was not always exactly good. "Do to others what thou wouldst that they should do to thee." "Patience is a good root." "You do not see that your father and mother do so and so." The standing, customary speeches, which have gone through the world from the time when "Adam delved and Eve span," down to the present day, and which to the very end of time will be ever in use,—together with assurances to the children, whenever they were punished, that all this was done for their benefit, and that the time would come when they would be thankful for it—which the children very seldom, if ever, believe—this citizen-of-the-world patriarchal household-fare, which was dealt out in the family of the Franks, as in every other worthy family,—did not always produce its proper effect.

Perhaps Elise troubled herself too much sometimes about the perpetual recurrence of the same fault,—perhaps she calculated too little on the invisible but sun-like and powerful influence of paternal love on her little human plants. True it is that she had great anxiety on their account, and that the development and future prospects of her daughters awoke much disquiet and trouble in her mind.

One day when such thoughts had troubled her more than usual, she felt the necessity of a pro-

dent and, in this respect, experienced female friend, to whom she could open her mind.

"Ernst," said she to her husband, as he prepared himself to go out immediately after dinner, "I shall go below for a few minutes to Evelina, but I will be back again by the time you return."

"Don't trouble yourself about that, Elise," said he; "remain as long as you like, I'll fetch you. Take my arm, and let us go down together, that I may see exactly whence I must fetch you."

CHAPTER XIII.

A LITTLE EDUCATION AND COFFEE COMMITTEE.

As Elise entered Evelina's room, Pyrrhus sprang, barking, towards her, and wagging his tail. Mrs. Gunilla was there, and she and the hostess emulated each other in welcoming their friend.

"Nay! best-beloved, that is charming!" exclaimed Mrs. Gunilla, embracing Elise cordially. "Now, how does the little lady!—some-what pale!—some-what out of spirits, I fancy! I will tell you confidentially that we shall presently get some magnificent coffee, which will cheer her up."

Evelina took Elise's hand, and looked kindly and sympathizing at her with her calm, sensible eyes. Pyrrhus touched her foot gently with his nose, in order to call her attention, and then seating himself on his hind-legs before her, began growling, which was his mode of expressing his sympathy also. Elise laughed, and she and Mrs. Gunilla vied with each other in caressing the little animal.

"Ah, let me sit down here and chat with you, where every thing seems so kind," said Elise, in reply to Evelina's glance, which spoke such a kind 'how do you do!' "Let me sit with you here where all is so quiet and so comfortable. I do not know how you manage, Evelina, but it seems to me as if the air in your room were clearer than elsewhere; whenever I come to you it seems to me as if I entered a little temple of peace."

"Yes, and so it seems to me," said Mrs. Gunilla.

"Yes, thank God," said Evelina, smiling, but with tears in her eyes; "here is peace!"

"And at our little lady's, the young folks raisee dust sometimes in the temper, as well as in the rooms," said Mrs. Gunilla, with facetiousness. "Well, well," added she, by way of consolation, "every thing has its time, and all dust will in time lay itself, only have patience."

"Ah, teach me that best thing, Aunt," said Elise, "for I am come here precisely with the hope of gaining some wisdom—I need it so much. But where are your daughters to-day, Evelina?"

"They are gone to-day to one of their friends," replied she, "to a little festival, which they have long anticipated with pleasure; and I also expect to have my share; from their relation of it to me."

"Ah! teach me, Evelina," said Elise, "how I can make my daughters as amiable, as good, and as happy, as your Laura and Karie. I confess that it is the anxiety for the bringing up of

my daughters which ever makes me uneasy, and which lies so heavy on my heart this very day. I distrust my own ability—my own knowledge, rightly to form their minds—rightly to unfold them."

"Ah, education, education!" said Mrs. Gunilla angrily; "people are everlastingly crying out now for education. One never can hear any thing now but about education. In my youth I never heard talk of education; nevertheless, a man was a man in those days for all that. But now, ever since *le tiers état* have pushed themselves so much forward, have made so much of themselves, and have esteemed themselves as something exclusive in the world with their education—now the whole world cries out, 'educate! educate!' Yes, indeed, they even tell us now that we should educate the maid-servants. I pray God to dispense with my living in the time when maid-servants are educated; I should have to wait on myself then, instead of their waiting on me. Yes, yes! things are going on towards that point at a pretty pace, that I can promise you! Already they read Frithiof and Axel; and before one is aware, one shall hear them talk of 'husband and wife,' and 'wife and husband,' and that they fancy themselves 'to be vines, which must wither if they are not supported,' and of 'sacrifices,' and other such affecting things, until they become quite incapable of cleaning a room, or scouring a kettle. Yes, indeed, there would be a pretty management in the world with all their education! It is a frenzy, a madness, with this education. It is horrible!"

The longer Mrs. Gunilla talked on this subject, the more excited she became.

Elise and Evelina laughed heartily, and then declared that they themselves, as belonging to the *tiers-état*, must take education, nay, even the education of maid-servants, under their protection.

"Ah," said Mrs. Gunilla, impatiently, "you make all so artistical and entangled with your education; and you cram the heads of children full of such a many things, that they never get them quite straight all the days of their life. In my youth, people learned to speak 'the language,' as the French was then called, just sufficient to explain a motto; enough of drawing to copy a pattern, and music enough to play a *contre danse* if it were wanted; but they did not learn, as now, to gabble about every thing in the world; but they turned to think, and if they knew less of art and splendour, why, they had the art to direct themselves, and to keep the world in peace!"

"But, your honour," said Evelina, "education in its true meaning, as it is understood in our time, teaches us to take a clearer view of ourselves and of the world at large, so that we may more correctly understand our own allotted station, estimate more properly that of others, and, in consequence, that every 'one may be fitted for his own station, and contented therewith,'"

"Yes, yes," said Mrs. Gunilla, "all that may be very good, but ——" But just then coffee came in, with biscuits and gingerbread, which made an important diversion in the entertainment, which took a livelier character. Mrs.

Gunilla imparted to Elise a variety of good counsel in the education of children. She recommended a certain *Orbis Pictus*, which she herself had studied when a child, and which began with the words, "Come here, boy, and learn wisdom from my mouth," and in which one could see clearly how the soul was fashioned, and how it looked. It looked like a pancake spread out on a table round and smooth, with all the five senses properly numbered. Mrs. Gunilla assured Elise, that if her children paid attention to this picture, it would certainly unravel and fashion their ideas of the human soul. Furthermore, she proposed the same educational course as had been used with such distinguished success upon her deceased father, and which consisted in every boy being combed with a fine comb every Saturday, and well whipt, whilst an ounce of English salt was allowed to each, in order to drive the bad spirits out of him. Beyond this they had, too, on the same day, a diet of bread and beer, in which was a dumpling called "Grammatica," so that the boys might be strengthened for the learning of the following week.

During all the merriment which these anecdotes occasioned, the Judge came in: delighted with the merriment, and delighted with his wife, he seated himself beside her, quite covetous of an hour's gossip with the ladies. Mrs. Gunilla served him up the human soul in the *Orbis Pictus*, and Elise instigated her still further to the relation of the purification of the boys. The Judge laughed at both from the bottom of his heart, and then the conversation turned again on the hard and disputable ground of education; all conceding, by general consent, the insufficiency of rules and methods to make it available.

Evelina laid great stress on the self-instruction of the teacher. "In the degree," said she, "in which man develops in himself goodness, wisdom, and ability, he succeeds commonly in calling out these in children."

All the little committee, without exception, gave their most lively approval; and Elise felt herself quite refreshed, quite strengthened by the words which showed her so clearly the path to her great object. She turned now, therefore, the conversation to Evelina's own history and development. It was well known that her path through life had been an unusual one, and one of independence, and Elise wished now to know how she had attained to that serenity and refreshing quiet which characterised her whole being. Evelina blushed, and wished to turn the conversation from herself; but as the Judge, with his earnest cordiality, united in the wish of his wife and Mrs. Gunilla, that Evelina would relate to them some passages in the history of her life, she acceded, remarking only that what she had to relate was in no way extraordinary; and then, after she had bethought herself for a moment, she began—addressing herself more especially to Elise—the narrative, which we will here designate

EVELINA'S HISTORY.

Have you ever been conscious, while listening to a beautiful piece of music, of a deep necessity, an indescribable longing, to find in your own life a harmony like that which you perceive

in the tone?—if so, you have then an idea of the suffering and the release of my soul. I was yet a little child when, for the first time, I was seized upon by this longing without at that time comprehending it. There was a little concert in the house of my parents: the harp, piano, horn, and clarionette, were played by four distinguished artists. In one part of the symphony the instruments united in an indescribably sweet and joyous melody, in the feeling of which my childish soul was seized upon by a strong delight, and at the same time by a deep melancholy. It seemed to me as if I had then an understanding of heaven, and I burst into tears. Ah! the meaning of these I have learned since then. Many such, and many far more painful, tears or longing, have fallen upon the dark web of my life.

To what shall I compare the picture of my youthful years? All that it, and many other such family pictures exhibit, is unclear, indefinite—in one word, blotted. It resembles a dull autumn sky, with its gray, shapeless, intermingling cloud-masses; full of feature without precision, of contour without meaning, of shadow without depth, of light without clearness, which so essentially distinguish the work of a bungler from that of a true master.

My family belonged to the middle classes, and we were especially well content to belong to this noble class; and as we lived from our rents, and had no rank in the state, we called ourselves, not without some self-satisfaction, people of rank. We exhibited a certain genteel indifference towards the *haute volée* in the citizen society, not only in words, but sometimes also in action; yet, nevertheless, in secret we were highly flattered or wounded by all those who came in contact with us from this circle; and not unfrequently too the family conversation turned, quite accidentally as it were, on the subject of its being ennobled on the plea of the important service which our father could render to the state in the House of Knights; and in the hearts of us young girls it excited a great pleasure when we were addressed as "my lady:" farther than this, however, our ambition did not ascend.

The daughters of the house were taught that all pomp and pleasure of this world was only vanity, that nothing was important and worth striving after but virtue and unblemished worth; yet for all this, it so happened that the most lively interests and endeavours, and the warmest wishes of the hearts of all, were directed to wealth, rank, and worldly fortune of every kind. The daughters were taught that in all things the will of God must alone direct them; yet in every instance they were guided by the fear of man. They were taught that beauty was nothing, and of no value; yet they were often compelled to feel, and that painfully, in the paternal house, that they were not handsome. They were allowed to cultivate some talents, and acquire some knowledge, but God forbid that they should ever become learned women; on which account they learned nothing thoroughly, though in many instances they pretended to knowledge, without possessing anything of its spirit, its nourishing strength, or esteem-inspiring earnestness. But above all things they learned, and this only more and more profoundly the more their years in-

creased, that marriage was the goal of their being; and in consequence whereof (though this was never inculcated in words,) to esteem the favour of man as the highest happiness, denying all the time that they thought so.

We were three sisters. As children, it was deeply impressed upon us that we must love one another; but in consequence of partiality on the side of our teachers, in consequence of praise and blame, rewards and punishments, which magnified little trifles into importance, envy and bitterness were early sown among the sisters. It was said of my eldest sister and myself, that we were greatly attached to each other; that we could not live asunder. We were given as examples of sisterly love; and from constantly hearing all this, we at last came to believe it. We were compared to the carriage horses of the family; and as we always, of our own accord, seated ourselves every day after dinner on each side of our good father, we were caressed by him, and called his carriage horses. Yet, in fact, we did not pull together. My sister was more richly endowed by nature than I, and won favour more easily. Never did I envy human being as I envied her, until in later years, and under altered circumstances, I learned to love her rightly, and to rejoice over her advantages.

We were not very rich, and we cast a philosophically compassionate glance upon all who were richer than we, who lived in a more liberal manner, had more splendid equipages, or who dressed themselves more elegantly. "What folly—what pitiable vanity!" said we; "poor people, who know nothing better!" We never thought that our philosophy was somewhat akin to the fox and the grapes.

If we looked in this manner upon the advantages of the great, we despised still more the pleasures of the crowd (we ought to find enough in ourselves—ah! alas!); and if even a theatrical piece was much talked of and visited, we had a kind of pride in saying, with perfect indifference, that we never had seen it; and whenever there was a popular festival, and the crowd went toward Huga or the Park, it was quite as certain that our calesche—if it were out at all—would drive on the road to Sabbatsburgh, or in some other direction equally deserted at the time; for all which, we prided ourselves on our philosophy. Yet in our hearts we really never were happy.

The daughters came out into society. The parents wished to see them loved and wooed; the daughters wished it no less—but they were not handsome—were dressed without any pretension. The parents saw very little company; and the daughters remained sitting at balls, and were nearly unobserved at suppers. Yet from year to year they slid on with the stream.

The daughters approached to ripened youth. The parents wished them married; they wished it likewise, which was only natural, especially as at home they were not happy; and it must be confessed that neither did they themselves do much to make it pleasant there. They were peevish and discontented—no one knew exactly what to do, or what she wanted; they groped about as if in a mist.

It is customary to hear unmarried ladies say that they are satisfied with their condition, and do not desire to change it. In this pretension

there lies more truth than people in general believe, particularly when the lively feelings of early youth are past. I have often found it so; and above all, wherever the woman, either in one way or another, has created for herself an independent sphere of action, or has found in a comfortable home that freedom, and has enjoyed that pure happiness of life, which true friendship, true education, can give.

A young lady of my acquaintance made what was with justice called a great marriage, although love played but a subordinate part. As some one felicitated her on her happiness, she replied, quite calmly, "O yes! it is very excellent to possess something of one's own." People smiled at her for her thus lightly esteeming, what was universally esteemed so great a good fortune; but her simple words, nevertheless, contain a great and universal truth. It is this "one's own," in the world, and in his sphere of action, which every man unavoidably requires if he would develop his own being, and win for himself independence and happiness, self-esteem, and the esteem of others. Even the nun has her cell, where she can prepare herself in peace for heaven, and in which she possesses her true home. But in social life, the unmarried woman has often not even a little cell which she can call her own; she goes like a cloud of mist through life, and finds firm footing nowhere. Hence, therefore, are there often marriages which ought never to have taken place, and that deep longing after that deep quiet of the grave, which is experienced by so many. But there is no necessity for this, and in times, in which the middle classes are so much more enlightened, it becomes still less so; we need, indeed, only contemplate the mass of people who strive for a subsistence, the crowds of neglected and uncared-for children that grow up in the world, in order to see that whatever is one-sided in the view of the destination of woman vanishes more and more, and opens to her a freer sphere of action.

But I return to the pros and cons of my own life, one feature of which I must particularly mention. If young ladies of our acquaintance connected themselves by marriage with men who were rather above than below them in property and station, we considered it, without exception, reasonable and estimable. But if a man whose connexions and prospects were similar to our own, walked towards our house for a wife, we considered it great audacity, and treated it accordingly. We were secretly looking out for genteeler and richer individuals than we. *N. B.* This *looking-out* in the great world is a very useful thing, both for gentlemen and ladies, although anybody who would be *naïve* enough to acknowledge as much, would not be greatly in favour either with those who looked-out, or those who did not.

In the mean time, a spirit, full of living energy was developed within me, which woke me to a sense of its after-existence—to a sense of the enslaving contradictions in which it moved, and to the strong desire to free itself from them. As yet, however, I did not understand what I was to do with my restless spirit. By contemplation, however, of noble works of art, it appeared to me that the enigma of my inner self was solved. When I observed the antique vestal, so calm, so assured, and yet so gentle—

when I saw how she stood, self-possessed, firm, and serene—I had a foretaste of the life which I needed, and sought after, both outwardly and inwardly, and I wept tears of melancholy longing.

Tortured by the distorted circumstances (many of which I have not mentioned) under which I moved in my own family, I began, as years advanced, to come in connexion with the world in a manner which, for a temper like mine, was particularly dangerous.

We have heard of the daughters of the Hausgiebel family, who grew old yawning over the spinning-wheel and the weaving-stool; but, better a thousand times, to grow old over the spinning-wheel and the ashes of the cooking-stove, than to become gray with artificial flowers—oh, how artificial!—in the hair, on the benches of the ballroom, or the seat of the supper-room, smiling over the world, which smiles over us no longer. This was the case with me.

There are mild, unpretending beings, who bow themselves quietly under the yoke which they cannot break; move, year after year, through the social circle, without any other object than to fill a place there—to ornament or to disfigure a wall. Peace to such patient souls! There, too, are joyous, fresh, ever youthful natures, who, even to old age, and under all circumstances, bring with them cheerfulness and new life into every circle in which they move. These belong to social life, and are its blessings. Many persons—and it is beautiful that it should be so—are of this description. I, however, belonged neither to the joyous and enlivening, nor yet to the patient and unpretending. On this account I began to shun social life, which occasioned in me, still more and more, a mortal weariness; yet, nevertheless, I was driven into it, to avoid the disquiet and discomfort which I experienced at home. I was a labourer who concealed his desire for labour, who had buried his talent in the earth, as was the hereditary custom of the circle in which I lived.

The flower yields odour and delight to man, it nourishes the insect with its sap; the dew-drop gives strength to the leaf on which it falls. In the relationships in which I lived, I was less than the flower or the dew-drop; a being endowed with power and with an immortal soul! But I awoke at the right time to a consciousness of my position. I say at the right time, because there may be a time when it is too late. There is a time when, under the weight of long, wearisome years, the human soul has become inflexible, and has no longer the power to raise itself from the slough into which it has sunk.

I felt how I was deteriorating; I felt clearly how the unemployed and uninterested life which I led, nourished, day after day, new weeds in the waste field of my soul. Curiosity, a desire for gossip, an inclination to malice and scandal, and an increasing irritability of temper, began to get possession of a mind which nature had endowed with too great a desire for action for it blamelessly to vegetate through a passive life, as so many can. Ah! if people live without an object, they stand, as it were, on the outside of active life, which gives strength to the inward occupation, even if no noble endeavour, or sweet friendship, give that claim to daily life which makes it occasionally, at least, a joy to live;

disquiet rages fiercely and tumultuously in the human breast, undermining health, temper, goodness, nay, even the quiet of conscience, and conjuring up all the spirits of darkness: so does the corroding rust eat into the steel-plate, and deface its clear mirror with a tracery of disordered caricatures.

I once read these words of that many-sided thinker, Steffan: "He who has no employment to which he gives himself with true earnestness, which he does not love as much as himself, has not discovered the true ground on which Christianity brings forth fruit. Such an occupation becomes a quiet and consecrated temple in all hours of affliction, in which the Saviour pours out his blessing; it unites us with other men, so that we can sympathize in their feelings, and makes our actions and our wills administer to their wants; it teaches us to know our own circumscribed condition, and rightly to weigh the worth of others. It is the true, firm, and fruit-bearing ground of real Christianity."

These words came like a breath of air on glowing sparks. A light was kindled in my soul, and I knew now what I wanted, and what I ought to do. After I had well considered all this with myself, I spoke with my parents, and opened my whole heart to them. They were surprised, opposed me, and besought me to think better of it. I had foreseen this; but as I adhered firmly and decidedly to my wishes, they surprised me by their kindness.

I was very fond of children; my plan was, therefore, to begin housekeeping for myself, and to undertake some work or occupation which should, by degrees, enable me to take two or three children, for whom I would provide, whom I would educate, and altogether adopt as my own. I was well persuaded that I needed many of the qualifications which make a good teacher; but I hoped that that new fountain of activity would, as it were, give to my whole being a new birth. My good-will, my affection for children would, I believed, be helpful to make me a good guide to them; and thus, though I could not become a wife, I might yet enjoy the blessing of a mother.

"And why could you not—why could you not?" interrupted Elise.

"People say," returned Evelina, smiling, "that you had to make your selection of a husband from many adorers; you cannot then understand a case in which there should not even be one choice. But truly, indeed, that was my case. But do not look at me so amazed—don't look at me as if I were guilty of high treason. The truth is, that I never had an opportunity to say either yes or no to a lover. With my sisters, who were much more agreeable, and much more attractive than I, it was otherwise.

But now I must return to that moment of my life when I released myself from every-day paths—but, thank God! not with violence, not amid discontent; but with the blessing of those who had given me life, for which I now, for the first time, blessed them.

Touched by my steadfastness of purpose, and by the true good-will which they had perceived in me, my parents determined to bestow upon my desired domestic establishment the sum of money which they had put aside for my dowry, in case I married. Indeed, their and my sin-

ters' kindness made them find pleasure in arranging all for me in the best and most comfortable manner; and when I left the paternal roof, it was with tears of real pain. Yet I had too clearly studied my own character and position to be undecided.

It was a day in April, my thirtieth birthday, when, accompanied by my own family, I went to take possession of my new, small, but pretty dwelling. Two young father-and-motherless girls, not quite without means, followed me to my new habitation. They were to become my children, I their mother.

I never shall forget the first morning of my waking in my new abode. At this very moment it is as if I saw how the day dawned in the chamber; how all the objects gradually assumed, as it seemed to me, an unaccustomed definiteness. From the near church ascended the morning hymn with its pleasant serious melody, which attuned the soul to harmonious peace. I rose early; I had to care for house and children. All was cheerful and festival-like in my soul; a sweet emotion penetrated me, like the enlivening breeze of spring. I saw the snow melt from the roofs and fall down in shining drops, yet never had I seen the morning light in them so clear as now. I saw the sparrows on the edge of the chimneys twittering to greet the morning sun. I saw without, people going joyfully about their employments: I saw the milk-woman going from door to door, and she seemed to me cheerfuller than any milk-woman I had ever seen before; and the milk seemed to me whiter and purer than common. It seemed to me as if I now saw the world for the first time. I fancied even myself to be altered as I looked in the glass; my eyes appeared to me larger; my whole appearance to have become better, and more important. In the chamber near me, the children awoke—the little immortals whom I was to conduct to eternal life. Yes, indeed, this was a beautiful morning! In it the world first beamed upon me, and at the same time my own inner world, and I became of worth and consequence in my own estimation.

The active yet quiet life which I had from this time forth, suited me perfectly well. From this time I became happily more and more in harmony with myself. The day was often wearisome, but then the evening rest was the sweeter, and the thought that I had passed a useful day refreshed my soul. The children gave me many griefs, many troubles; but they gave likewise an interest to my life, and happiness to my heart, and all the while, in pleasure and want, in joy and sorrow, they became dearer and dearer to me. I cannot imagine that children can be dearer to their own mother than Laura and Marie are to me.

In this new position I also became a better daughter, a more tender sister than I had hitherto been; and I could now cheer the old age of my parents far more than if I had remained an inactive and superfluous person in their house. Now for the first time I had advantage of all that was good in my education. Amid lively activity, and with a distinct object in life, my being lost by degrees what was vain and false; and the knowledge which I had obtained, the truths which I had known, were productive in heart and deed since I had, so to say, struck root in life.

Evelina ceased. All had heard her with sympathy, but no one more than Ernst Frank. A new picture of life was opened to his view, and the truest sympathy expressed itself on his manly features. He felt in this picture a contracted world in a depressed and insecure condition, and his thoughts already busied themselves how best to let in warmth and light and cheerfulness.

"Ah, yes!" said Mrs. Gunilla, with a gentle sigh, "everybody here in this world has their difficult path, but if every one walks in the fear and admonition of the Lord, all arrive in the end at their home. Our Lord God helps us all!" And Mrs. Gunilla took a large pinch of snuff.

"Don't forget the *Orbis Pictus*," exclaimed she to Elise, who with her husband was preparing to go; "don't forget it, and let the children be educated from it, that they may observe how the soul looks. He! he! he!"

CHAPTER XIV.

THE ORPHAN.

THE day was declining, and Ernst and Elise sat in one of the windows of the best parlour. Mutual communications, received with mutual sympathy, had made them have joy in each other—had let them feel at peace with life. They were now silent; but a presentiment that for the future they should be ever happier with each other, like an harmonious tone, responded in their hearts, and brightened their countenances. In the meantime, the shadows of evening began to grow broader and a soft rain pattered on the window. The sonorous voice of the Candidate, as he told stories to the children, interrupted occasionally by their questions and exclamations, was heard in the saloon. A feeling of home-peace came over the heart of the father; he took the hand of his wife affectionately between his, and looked joyfully into her gentle countenance, while she was projecting little domestic arrangements. In the midst of this sense of happiness a cloud suddenly passed over the countenance of the Judge, and tears filled his eyes.

"What is it, Ernst! what is amiss, Ernst?" asked his wife tenderly, while she wiped away the tears with her hand.

"Nothing," added he, "but that I feel how happy we are,—I see you, I hear our children without there, and I cannot but think on that unfortunate child opposite, which will be ruined in that wretched home."

"Ah, yes!" sighed Elise; "God help all unfortunate little ones on the earth!"

Both cast their eyes involuntarily towards the opposite house. Something was moving before the nearest window; a female figure mounted on the window ledge, and a large white cloth, which was quickly unrolled, hid all the rest.

"He is dead!" said both husband and wife, looking at each other.

The Judge sent over to inquire how it was; the messenger returned with the tidings that Mr. N. had been dead some hours.

Lights were now kindled behind the blind,

and shadows, moving backward and forward, showed that people were busy within the chamber. The Judge walked up and down his room, evidently much affected. "The poor child!—the poor little girl! what will become of her, poor child!" were his broken exclamations.

Elise read the soul of her husband. She had now for some time, in consequence of a wish which she had perceived in his heart, accustomed herself to a thought, which yet at this moment her lips seemed unwilling to express.

"Ernst," at length, began she with a sigh, "the vessel which holds food for six girls will hold it for seven also."

"Do you think so?" asked he, with pleasure and with beaming eyes. He embraced his wife tenderly, placed her beside him, and continued, "Have you proved your own strength? The heaviest part of this adoption would rest upon you. Yet if you feel that you have courage to undertake it, you would fulfil the wish of my heart."

"Ernst," said she, repressing a tear, "I am weak, and nobody knows that better than you do; but my will is good, and will undertake the trouble—you will support me!"

"Yes, we will help one another," said he, rising up joyfully. "Thank you, dear Elise," said he, kissing her hand affectionately. "Shall I go to fetch the child immediately? but perhaps it will not come with me."

"Shall I go with you?" asked she.

"You!" said he; "but its gets dark—it rains."

"We can take an umbrella," replied she; "and besides that, I will put on my cloak. I will be ready immediately."

Elise went to dress herself, and her husband went to help her, put on her cloak for her, and paid her a thousand little affectionate attentions.

After Elise had given sundry orders to Briggita, she and her husband went out, leaving the children setting their little heads together full of curiosity and wonder.

The two crossed the street in wind and rain; and after they had ascended the dark staircase, they arrived at the room which Mr. N. had inhabited. The door stood half open; a small candle, just on the point of going out, burned within, spreading an uncertain and tremulous light over everything. No living creature was visible within the room, which had a desolate, and, as one might say, stripped appearance, so naked did it seem. The dead man lay there on his bed, near to which was no trace of anything which might have mitigated the last struggle. A cloth covered his face. Ernst Frank went towards the bed, and softly raising the cloth, observed for a moment silently the terrible spectacle, felt the pulse of the deceased, and then covering again the face, returned silently, with a pale countenance, to his wife.

"Where can we find the child?" said she hastily. They looked searchingly around; a black shadow, in a human form, seemed to move itself in one corner of the room. It was the orphan who sat there, like a bird of night, pressing herself close to the wall. Elise approached her, and would have taken her in her arms, when the child suddenly raised her hand, and gave her a fierce blow. Elise drew back

astonished, and then, after a moment, approached again the half-savage girl with friendly words; again she made a threatening demonstration, but her hands were suddenly grasped by a strong manly hand, and a look so serious and determined was riveted upon her, that she trembled before it, and resigned herself to the power of the stronger.

The Judge lifted her up and set her on his knee, while she trembled violently.

"Do not be afraid of us," said Elise, caressingly; "we are your good friends. If you will come with me this evening to my little children, you shall have sweet milk and white bread with them, and then sleep in a nice little bed with a rose-coloured coverlet."

The white bread, the rose-coloured coverlet, and Elise's gentle voice, seemed to influence the child's mind.

"I would willingly go with you," said she, "but what will father say when he wakes?"

"He will be pleased," said Elise, wrapping a warm shawl about the shoulders of the child.

At that moment a sound was heard on the stairs, little Sara uttered a faint cry of terror, and began to tremble anew. Mr. N.'s house-keeper entered, accompanied by two boys. Frank announced to her his determination to take little Sara, as well as the effects of her deceased father, under his care. At mention of the last word, the woman began to fume and swear, and the Judge was obliged to compel her silence by severe threats. He then sent one of the boys for the proprietor of the house, and after he had in his presence taken all measures for the security of the effects of the deceased, he took the little Sara in his arms, wrapped her in his cloak, and, accompanied by his wife, went out.

All this time, an indescribable curiosity was excited among the little Franks. Their mother had said, in going out, that perhaps, on her return, she should bring them another sister. It is impossible to say the excitement this occasioned, and what was conjectured and counselled by them. The Candidate could not satisfy all the questions which were let loose upon him. In order, therefore, somewhat to allay their fermentation, he set them to hop through the room like crows, placing himself at the head of the train. A flock of real crows could not have fluttered away with greater speed than did they as the saloon door opened and the father and mother entered. Petrea appeared curious in the highest degree, as her father, opening his wide cloak, softly set down something which, at the first moment, Petrea, with terror, took for a chimney-sweep; but which, on closer inspection, seemed to be a very nice thin girl of about nine years old, with black hair, dark complexion, and a pair of uncommonly large black eyes, which looked almost threateningly on the white and bright-haired little ones which surrounded her.

"There, you have another sister," said the father, leading the children towards each other; "Sara, these are your sisters—love one another, and be kind to one another, my children."

The children looked at each other, somewhat surprised; but as Henrik and Louise took the little stranger by the hand, they soon all emulated each other in bidding her welcome.

Supper was served up for the children, more lights were brought in, and the scene was lively. Every thing was sacrificed to the new-comer. Louise brought out for her two pieces of confectionary above a year old, and a box in which they might be preserved yet longer.

Henrik presented her with a red trumpet, conferring gratuitous instruction on the art of blowing it.

Eva gave her her doll Josephine in its new gauze dress.

Leonore lighted her green and red wax tapers, before the dark-eyed Sara.

Petrea—ah, Petrea, would so willingly give something with her whole heart. She rummaged through all the places where she kept any thing, but they concealed only the fragments of unlucky things; here, a doll without arms; here a table with only three legs; here two halves of a sugar-pig; here a dog without head and tail. All Petrea's playthings, in consequence of experiments which she was in the habit of making on them, were fallen into the condition of that which had been—and even that gingerbread-heart with which she had been accustomed to decoy Gabriele, had, precisely on this very day, in an unlucky moment of curiosity, gone down Petrea's throat. Petrea really possessed nothing which was fit to make a gift of. She acknowledged this with a sigh; her heart was filled with sadness, and tears were just beginning to run down her cheeks, when she was consoled by a sudden thought: The girl and the rose-bush! That jewel she still possessed; it hung still, undestroyed, framed and behind glass, over her bed, and fastened by a rose-blue ribbon. Petrea hesitated only a moment; in the next she had clambered up to her little bed, taken down the picture, and hastened now with beaming eyes and glowing cheeks to the others, in order to give away the very loveliest thing she had, and to declare solemnly that now "Sara was the possessor of the girl and the rose-bush."

The little African appeared very indifferent about the sacrifice which the little European had made to her. She received it, it is true, but she soon laid it down again without caring any more about it, which occasioned Louise to propose that she should keep it for her.

In the midst of these little occurrences the Assessor came in. He looked with an inquisitive glance round the room, showed his white teeth, and said to himself, "Yes, it's all right; it is what I expected. So, indeed," added he, aloud, and in his angry manner, while he cordially shook the hand of his friend, "I see you thought you had not children enough of your own in the house, but you must drag in those of other people! How many do you mean to burden yourself with? Will there not be another to-morrow? Were you not satisfied with a whole half dozen girls of your own? And what will become of them? One shall presently not be able to get into the house for children! I suppose that you have such a superfluity of money and property, that you must go and squander it on others! Nay, good luck to you! good luck to you!"

Ernst Frank and his wife replied only by smiles to the grumbling of their friend, and by the request that he would spend the evening

with them. But he said he had not time; and then, after he had laid large pears, which he took from his pocket, under the napkins on the children's plates, he went out.

Every one of these pears had its own distinctive sign: round Sara's was a gold-coloured ribbon; and upon her plate, under the pear, was found a bank-note, of considerable value. It was his gift to the fatherless, yet he never would acknowledge it. That was his way.

As the mother took Sara by the hand, in order to conduct her to rest, Petrea had the indescribable delight of seeing that, from all the little presents which had been made to her, she only took with her the girl and the rose-bush, which she appeared to regard with pleasure.

Sara was seized with violent grief in the comfortable bedroom; tears streamed from her eyes, and she called loudly for her father. Elise held her quietly in her arms, and let her weep out her grief on her bosom, and then gently undressing her, and laying the weary child in bed, had the pleasure of feeling how affectionately she clasped her arms round her neck.

The girl and the rose-bush hung over her bed, but still there seemed to be no rest on the snow-white couch for the "little African." Her dark eyes glanced wildly about the room, and her hands grasped convulsively Elise's white dress.

"Don't go," whispered she, "or else they will come and murder me."

Elise took the child's hands in hers, and repeated a simple and pious little prayer, which she had taught to her own children. Sara said the words after her; and though it was only mechanically, she seemed to become calmer, though shudderings still shook her frame, and she held fast by Elise's dress. Elise seated herself by her, and, at the request of the other children, "Mother, sing the song of the dove. Oh, the song of the dove!" She sang, with a pleasant, low voice, that little song which she herself had made for her children:

There sitteth a dove so white and fair,
All on the lily spray,
And she listeneth how, to Jesus Christ,
The little children pray.
Lightly she spreads her friendly wings,
And to heaven's gate hath sped,
And unto the Father in heaven she bears
The prayers which the children have said.
And back she comes from heaven's gate,
And brings—that dove so mild—
From the Father in heaven, who hears her speak,
A blessing for every child.
Then, children, lift up a pious prayer,
It hears whatever you say,
That heavenly dove, so white and fair,
That sits on the lily spray.

During this song, the dove of peace descended on the soul of the child. Pleasant images passed before her mind: the girl, and the rose-bush, and the singing Elsie were the same person—the rose diffused pleasant odour; and while the long dark lashes approached her cheek yet nearer and nearer, it seemed to her as if a white lovely singing bird spread out his wings caressingly and purifyingly over her breast. By degrees the little hand opened itself, and let go the dress which it had grasped, the tearful eyes closed, and the sweetness of repose came over the fatherless and the motherless.

THE NEW HOUSE

While Elise listened to these words, she felt as if a refreshing breeze passed through her soul. Nothing more seemed to her difficult. All the troubles of life seemed light, on account of the bright end to be attained. And then, as she thought on the manly warm heart which lived so entirely for her good and the children's, she felt a proud joy that she could look up to her husband; and at the same time a sense of humility slid into her heart, she bowed herself over his hand, and kissed it fervently.

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them than that they should govern their feet, and keep their boot and shoestrings tied. But from the queen down to the charwoman, there is not a woman in this world who knows how to keep her shoes tied!"

Such was the philippic of Jeremias Munter, as he came into the room with Petrea, and saw, after the great shipwreck, what remained of the confectionary. Petrea's excuses, and her prayers for forgiveness, could not soften his anger. True it is, that an unfortunate disposition to laugh, which overcame her, gave to all her professions of distress a very doubtful appearance. Her distress, however, for all that, was real; and when Eva came, and said with a beseeching, flattering voice, "Dear uncle, do not be angry any longer; poor Petrea is really quite cast down—besides which she really has hurt her knee," the good man replied with a very different voice:

"But has she, indeed! But why are people so clumsy—so given to tripping and stumbling, that one —"

"One can always get some more confections," said Eva.

"Can one!" exclaimed Jeremias; "does it grow on trees, then?" How! Shall one then throw away one's money for confectionary, in order to see it lie about the streets? Pretty management that would be, methinks!"

"Yet just say one kind word to Petrea," besought Eva.

"A kind word!" repeated Jeremias: "I would just tell her that another time she should be so good as to fasten her shoe-strings. Nay, I will go now after some more confectionary; but only on your account, little Miss Eva. Yes, yes; say I—I will now go: I can dance also, if it be for — But how it rains! lend me the "family-roof," and the cloak there I need also. Now, then, what a face is that to make!—What, will the people stare at me!—all very good; if it gives them any pleasure, they may laugh at me; I shall not find myself any the worse for it. Health and comfort are above all things, and one dress is just as good as another."

The young girls laughed, and threw the Court-Preacher, which hardly reached to his knees, over the shoulders of the Assessor, and thus appeared he went forth with long strides.

The family had this day removed into a new use. Judge Frank had bought it, together with a small garden, for the life-time of himself and his wife, and for the last two years he had been pulling down, building up, repairing and arranging: some doors he had built up, others he had opened, till all was as convenient and as comfortable as he wished. His wife, in full confidence, had left all to his good judgment, well pleased on her own account to be spared the noise of bricklayers and carpenters; to be spared the sound of sawing, from going under scaffolds, and from clambering over troughs full of mortar. Papers for the walls, and other ornamental things, had been left to the choice of herself and her daughters.

And now he went, full of pleasure, with his wife from one story to another, from one room into another—greatly pleased with the convenient, spacious, and cheerful-looking habitation, and yet even more so with his wife's lively gratification in all his work, from the very top to

the bottom; from cellar up to the roof; into the mangling-room, the wood-chamber, and everywhere.

We will not weary the reader by following them in this domestic survey, but merely make him acquainted with some of the rooms in which he will often meet the family. We merely pass through the saloon and best parlour; they were handsome, but resembled all such apartments; but the room which the Judge had arranged with most especial love, which was designed for daily use, and as the daily assembling place of the family, and which deserves our most intimate acquaintance, was the library, so called. It was a large, very lively room, with three windows on one side looking into a spacious market-place. Louise rejoiced especially over this, for thus they could look out of the windows on market-days, and see at once what they wished to buy; directly opposite lay the church, with its beautiful churchyard well planted with trees; these objects pleased Elise greatly. The side of the room opposite to the windows, was entirely covered with books; the shelves consisted of several divisions, each one of which contained the literature of a different country. In niches between the several divisions stood, on simple but tasteful pedestals, busts of distinguished men, great for their heroic and peaceful actions—standing there, said the Judge, not because they separated the different nations of the earth, but because they united them. Ernst Frank's library was truly a select one; it had been the pleasure of his life, and still it was his delight to be increasing his collection of books. Now, for the first time, they were collected and arranged all in one place. He rejoiced over these treasures, and besought his daughters freely to make use of them, on this one express condition, that every book should be restored again to its right place. To Louise was consigned the office of librarian, to Petrea that of amanuensis. Both mother and daughters were delighted with this room, and began to consider where the work-table, the flower-table, and the bird-cage should stand, and when all were arranged, they were found to suit their places admirably. Against one of the short walls stood the green sofa, the appointed place for the mother; and against the opposite one the piano, and the harp, which was Sara's favourite instrument, together with a guitar, whose strings were touched by Eva, as she sang "Mamma mia."

An agreeable surprise awaited Elise as she was led through a papered door which conducted from the library into a sort of boudoir, whose one window had the same prospect as the library—this was solely and entirely her own consecrated room. She saw with emotion that the tasteful furniture of the room was the work of her daughters; her writing-table stood by the window, several beautiful pictures and a quantity of very pretty china adorned the room. Elise saw, with thankful delight, that all her favourite tastes, and all her little fancies, had been studied and gratified both by husband and children.

A small papered door, likewise, on the other side, conducted Elise into her sleeping-room; and her husband made her observe how smoothly these doors turned on their hinges, and how easily she, from either side, could lock herself in and remain in quiet.

After this room, nothing gave Elise greater delight than the arrangements for bathing, which the Judge had made particularly convenient and comfortable; and he now turned the white taps with remarkable pleasure, to exhibit how freely the warm water came out of this, and the cold—no, out of this came the warm water, and out of the other the cold. The cheerfulness and comfort of the whole arrangement was intended to give to the bathing day—which was almost as religiously observed in this family as the Sunday—a double charm. In a room adjoining that which was appropriated to dressing, the old cleanly Brigitta had already her fixed residence. Here was she and the great linen-press to grow old together. Here ticked her clock, and purred her cat; here blossomed her geraniums and balsams, with the Bible and Prayer-book laying between them.

The three light and pleasant rooms intended for the daughters lay in the story above, and were simply but prettily furnished.

"Here they will feel themselves quite at home," said the father, as he looked round with beaming eyes, "don't you think so, Elise?" We will make home so pleasant to our children, that they shall not wish to leave it without an important and urgent cause. No disquiet, no discontent with home and the world within it, shall drive them from the paternal roof. Here they can have leisure and quiet, and be often alone, which is a good thing. Such moments are needed by every one, in order to strengthen and collect themselves; and are good for young girls as well as for any one else!"

The mother gave her applause fully and cheerfully; but immediately afterward she was a little absent, for she had something of importance to say to her eldest daughter; and as at that very moment Louise came in, an animated conversation commenced between them, of which the following reached the father's ear.

"And after them pancakes; and, my good girl, take care that six of them are excellently thick and savoury; you know, indeed, how Henrik likes them."

"And should we not," suggested Louise, "have whipped cream, with raspberry jam, with the pancakes?"

"Yes, with pleasure," returned the mother, "Jacobi would unquestionably recommend that."

Louise blushed, and the Judge besought that there might be something a little more substantial for supper; which was promised him.

The Assessor shook out "the family roof" in the saloon in indignation: "The most miserable roof in all Christendom," said he; "it defends neither from wind or rain, and is as heavy as the ark! and —"

But at the very moment when he was shaking and scolding his worst, he perceived a sound—Exclamations and welcomes, in every possible variety of joyous and cordial tones. The "court-preacher" was thrown over head and shoulders into "the family roof," and with great leaps hastened Jeremias forward to shake hands with the son and the friend of the house, who were just now returned home from the University.

Tokens of condolence mingled themselves with welcomes and felicitations.

"How wet, and pale, and cold you are!"

"O, we have had a magnificent shower!" said Henrik, shaking himself, and casting a side glance on Jacobi, who looked lamentably in his wet apparel. "Such weather as this is quite an affair of my own. In wind and rain one becomes so—I don't know rightly how—do you, *mon cher*?"

"A jelly, a perfect jelly!" said Jacobi, in a mournful voice! "how can one be otherwise, knocked about in the most infamous of peasant-cars, and storm, and pouring rain, so that one is perfectly battered and melted! Hu, hu, u, u, uh!"

"O, according to my opinion," said Henrik, laughing at the gestures of his travelling companion, "it is a hardening sort of weather; there is a proud exalting feeling in it, sitting there quite calm under the raging of the elements; especially when one looks down from one's elevation on other fellow-mortals, who go lamenting, and full of anxiety, under their umbrellas. Thus one sits on one's car as on a throne; nay, indeed, one gets quite a flattering idea of oneself, as if one were a little philosopher. Apropos! I bethink myself now, as if we had seen, as we came this way, a philosopher in a lady's cloak walking hither. But, how are you all, dear sisters? How long it is since I saw you!" and he pressed their hands between his cold and wet ones.

This scene, which took place in twilight, was quickly brought to an end by the ladies resolutely driving the gentleman out to their own chamber to change their clothes. Jacobi, it is true, on his own account, did not require much driving, and Louise found Henrik's philosophy on this occasion not so fully adopted. Louise had already taken care that a good blazing fire should welcome the travellers in their chamber.

"By Jove, my dear girls, how comfortable it is here!" exclaimed the Judge in the joy of his heart, as he saw the library thus populous, and in its for-the-future every-day state. "Are you comfortable there, on the sofa, Elise? Let me get you a footstool. No sit still my child! what are men for in this world?"

The Candidate—we beg his pardon, the Master Jacobi—appeared no longer to be the same person who had, an hour before, stood there in his wet dress, as he made his appearance, handsomely appareled, with his young friend, before the ladies, and his countenance actually beamed with delight at the joyful scene which he there witnessed.

People now examined one another. They discovered that Henrik had become considerably paler as well as thinner, which Henrik received as a compliment to his studies. Jacobi wished also a compliment on his studies, but it was unanimously refused to him on account of his blooming appearance. Louise thought privately to herself, that Jacobi's bearing was considerably more manly; that he had a simpler and more decided demeanour; he was become, she thought, a little more like her father. Her father was Louise's ideal of perfection.

Little Gabriele blushed deeply, and half hid herself behind her mother, as her brother addressed her.

"How is your highness, my most gracious princess Turndot?" said he; "has your high-

ness no little riddle at hand with which to confute weak heads?"

Her little highness looked in the highest degree confused, and withdrew the hand which her brother kissed again and again. Gabriele was quite bashful before the tall student.

Henrik had a little *tête-à-tête* with every sister, but it was somewhat short and cold with Sara; after which he seated himself by his mother, took her hand in his, and a lively and general conversation began, whilst Eva handed about the confectionary.

"But what is amiss now?" asked Henrik suddenly. "Why have the sisters all left us to take counsel together there, with such important judge-like faces? Is the nation in danger? May not I go, in order to save the native land? If one could only first of all have eaten one's supper in peace," added he, speaking aside, after the manner of the stage.

But it was precisely about the supper that they were talking. There was a great danger that the pancakes would not succeed; and Louise could not prevent Henrik and Jacobi running down into the kitchen, where, to the greatest amusement of the young ladies, and to the tragicomic despair of the cook, they acted their parts as cooks so ridiculously that Louise was obliged at length, with an imposing air, to put an end to the laughter, to the joking, and to the burnt pancakes, in order that she herself might put her hand to the work. Under her eye all went well; the pancakes turned out excellently. Jacobi besought one from her own hand, as wages for his work; graciously obtained it, and then swallowed the hot gift with such rapture that it certainly must have burnt him inwardly, had it not been for another species of warmth—which we consider very probable—a certain well-known spiritual fire, which counteracted the material burning, and made it harmless. Have we not here, in all simplicity, suggested something of a homœopathic nature?

But we will leave the kitchen, that we may seat ourselves with the family at the supper-table, where the mother's savouring, white pancakes, and the thick ones for Henrik, were to be found, and where, with raspberry cream, the whole was devoured with the greatest enjoyment.

After this, they drank the health of the travelers, and sang a merry little song, made by Petrea. The father was quite pleased with Petrea, who, quite electrified, sang too with all her might, although not with a most harmonious voice, which however did not annoy her father's somewhat unmusical ear.

"She screams above them all," said he to his wife, who was considerably less charmed than he with her accompaniment.

Although every one in the company had had an exciting and fatiguing day, the young people began immediately after supper, as if according to a natural law, to arrange themselves for the dance.

Jacobi, who appeared to be captivated by Sara's appearance, led her in the magic circle of the waltz.

"Our sensible little Louise," a rather broad-set, but very well-grown blonde of eighteen, distinguished herself in the dance by her beautiful steps and her pleasing though rather too grave

carriage. Everybody, however, looked with greater admiration on Eva, because she danced with heart and soul. Gabriele with her golden curls, flew round like a butterfly. But who did not dance this evening? Everybody was actually enthusiastic—for all were infected with the joyous animal spirits of Henrik. Even Jeremiaas Munter, to the amazement of everybody, led Eva, with most remarkable skill, through the Palska,* the most artificial and perplexing of dances.

At midnight the dance was discontinued on account of Elise. But before they separated, the Judge begged his wife to sing the little well-known song, "The first evening in the new house." She sang it in her simple, soul-touching manner, and the peaceful cheerfulness which this song breathed penetrated every heart; even the grave countenance of the Judge gleamed with an affectionate emotion. A quiet transfiguration appeared to rest on the family, and brightened all countenances; for it is given to Song like the sun, to throw its glorifying light upon all human circumstances, and to lend them beauty, at least for a moment. "The spinner," and "the aged man by the road-side," are led by song into the kingdom of beauty, even as they are by the gospel into the kingdom of heaven.

On taking leave for the night, all agreed upon a rendezvous the next morning after breakfast in the garden, in order to see what was to be made of it.

The father conducted the daughters up into their chambers. He wanted to see yet once more how they looked, and inquired from them again and again, "Are you satisfied my girls? Do they please you? Would you wish anything besides? If you wish anything, speak out from your whole heart!"

There was not a happier man on the face of the earth than Judge Frank, when his daughters had assured him of their hearty and grateful contentment.

The mother, on her part, had taken her first-born with her into her boudoir,—she had as yet not been able to speak one word to him alone. Now she questioned him on everything, small and great, which concerned him, and how freely and entirely he opened his whole heart to her!

They talked of the circumstances of the family: of the purchase of this said property; of the debt which they had thereby contracted; of the means through which, by degrees, it would be paid off, and of the necessity there was for greater economy on all sides; they talked too of the daughters of the house.

"Louise is superb," said Henrik, "but her complexion is rather muddy; could she not use some kind of wash for it? She would be so much handsomer if she had a fresher complexion; and then she looks, the least in the world, cathedral-like. What a solemn air she had to-night, as Jacobi made some polite speech or other to her! Do you know, mother, I think they all sit too much; it is in that way that people get such grave cathedral-like looks. We must make them take more exercise; we must

* A wild and animated Swedish national dance, mentioned before in "The Neighbours."

find out some lively exercise for them. And Eva! how she is grown, and how kind and happy she looks! It is a real delight to see her—one can actually fall in love with her! But what in the world is to be done with Petrea's nose! It does, indeed, get so long and large, that I cannot tell what is to be done! It is a pity, though, for she is so good-hearted and merry. And Leonore, how sickly and unhappy she looks! We must endeavour to cheer her up."

"Yes," said the mother, with a sigh; "if she were but healthy, we could soon manage that; but how does little Gabriele please you?"

"Ah! she is very lovely, with her high-bred little airs; altogether quite fascinating," said Henrik.

"And Sara!" asked she.

"Yes," said he, "she is lovely—very lovely, I think; but still there is a something, at least to my taste, very unpleasant in her. She is not like my sisters; there is a something about her so cold—so, almost repulsive."

"Yes," said the mother, sighing; "there is at times something very extraordinary about her, more particular of late. I fear that a certain person has too great, and that not a happy influence over her. But Sara is a richly gifted, and truly interesting girl, out of whom something very good may be made, if—if— She gives us a great deal of anxiety at times, for we are as much attached to her as if she were our own child. She has a most extraordinary talent for music—you must hear her. There really is much that is distinguishing and truly amiable in her; you will see it as you remain so much longer time with us."

"Yes, thank God!" said Henrik, "I can now reckon on that, on remaining some months at home."

The conversation now turned on Henrik's future prospects. His father wished him to devote himself to mining, and with this end in view he had studied, but he felt ever, more and more, a growing inclination to another profession, and this had become a ground of dissatisfaction in the family. The mother besought him to prove himself carefully and seriously before he deserted the path to which his father was attached, and which Henrik himself had selected in common council with his father. The young man promised this solemnly. His soul was warm and noble. His young heart possessed very fine sentiment—a high enthusiasm for virtue and for his country, with a glowing desire to live only to that end. The wish to be useful to the community generally, united itself with all his views of self-advantage, and he only saw his own prosperity in connexion with that of his family. These thoughts and sentiments poured themselves forth in that sweet hour of confidential intercourse with his mother—his happy mother—whose heart beat with joy and with proudest hope of her first-born—the favourite of her soul—her summer child!

"And when I have made my own way in the world," added Henrik, joyfully kissing the hand of his mother; "and have a house of my own, then, mother, you shall come to me, and live with me, will you not?"

"And what would your father say to that?" said she, in a tone like his own.

"Oh! there are all the sisters that can keep house for him," said Henrik, "and—"

"Do you intend to sit up here all the whole night?" asked a voice at the door: it was the voice of Ernst, and both mother and son rose up as if they had been caught in the fact of conspiracy. The father, however, was informed of the plot against him, whereupon he declared that all this would lead to such fearful consequences that they had better say no more about it.

Both mother and son laughed, and said "Good night" to each other.

"Heavens! what a white hand!" exclaimed Henrik in a sort of ecstasy, over the hand which he had pressed to his lips. "And what small fingers! nay, how can people have such small fingers!" and with a sort of comic devotion, he again kissed that beautiful hand.

"I see I must carry you off forcibly, if I would have you to myself," said the Judge, cheerfully, and taking his wife at the same time in his arms, he carried her out.

But her thoughts remained still with her first-born—her handsome and richly endowed son; and she uttered a glowing prayer for the fulfilment of all her wishes for him, while all were sleeping sweetly that first night in the new house.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE MORROW.

How pleasant it must have been to the family the next morning to assemble round their amply-supplied breakfast-table in a handsome and spacious saloon! But saloon, and breakfast-table, and all outward comforts, signify nothing, if the inward are wanting; if affectionate dispositions and kind looks do not make the saloon bright, and the breakfast well-flavoured. But nothing was wanting on this occasion to the family of the Franks—not even the sun. It shone in brightly to illumine the pleasant scene.

Henrik made a speech to Madame Folette, in testimony of his love and reverence for her, and of his joy on meeting her again in so good a state of preservation.

Louise, with the help of Eva, served tea and coffee, bread and butter, etc., taking particular care that everybody had just what they liked best—the basket which held sugar-biscuits was pushed constantly into the neighbourhood of Jacob.

"How glorious this!" exclaimed Henrik, rubbing his hands and casting a glance of pleasure around on his parents and sisters, "it is quite paradisiacal! What does your majesty desire? Ah, your most devoted servant! Coffee, if I might ask it, excellent Madame Folette!"

"After breakfast," said the mother, "I have something for you to guess."

"Something to guess?" said Henrik, "what can it be? Tell me, what is it like? what name does it bear?"

"A wedding," replied she.

"A wedding! A most interesting novelty! I cannot swallow another morsel till I have made it out! Jacob, my best fellow, can I possess myself of a biscuit? A wedding! Do I know the parties?"

"Perfectly well."

"It cannot be our excellent Munter," suggested he. "It is very extraordinary."

"Oh, no, no! He'll not marry!"

"He is so horribly old," said Eva.

"Old!" exclaimed the father. "He is something above forty, I fancy; you don't call that so horribly old, do you, my little Eva? But it is true he has always had an old look."

"You must guess better than that," said the mother.

"I have it! I have it!" said Petrea, blushing.

"It is Laura, Aunt Evelina's Laura!"

"Ah, light breaks in," said Henrik; "and the bridegroom is Major Arvid G., is it not?"

"You have guessed," said his mother. "A very good match for Laura. Major G. is a very good-looking, excellent young man; and beyond this, has a good property. He has persuaded Evelina to remove with Karie to his beautiful seat, at Axelholme, and to consider Laura's and his home as theirs for the future. Eva dear, set the ham before Henrik; what do you want, my angel Gabriele? Leonore, shall I give you some more bread and butter, my child? No?"

"But I hope," exclaimed Henrik, "that we are invited to the wedding. Evelina, who is such a sensible woman, must have had the good sense to invite us. Most gracious sister Louise, these rolls—very nourishing and estimable rolls no doubt—but, were they baked before or after the Flood?"

"After," replied Louise, smiling, but a little piqued.

"O, I humble myself in the dust," said he.

"I pray your majesty most graciously to pardon me—[*aside*—but after all they taste remarkably either of the ark or of a cupboard.] But what in all the world sort of breakfast are you making, Petrea? Nay, dear sister, such a superfluity in eating never can be good—ah, I pray you do not eat yourself ill!"

Petrea, who had her curious fancies, or as Louise called them, her raptures, had now for some time had the fancy to take only a glass of cold water and a piece of dry bread for her breakfast. On account of this abstinence, Henrik now jested, and Petrea answered him quite gaily; Louise, on the contrary, took up the matter quite seriously, and thought—as many others did—that this whim of Petrea's had a distant relationship to folly; and folly, Louise—the sensible Louise—considered the most horrible of horrors.

"Now, really, you must not sit gossiping any longer," exclaimed the father, when he saw their mouths only put in motion by conversation, "else I must go away and leave you; and I should very much like to go into the garden with you first."

A general rising followed these words, and all betook themselves to the garden, with the exception of Leonore, who was unwell, and the little Gabriele, who had to be careful on account of the damp.

In the meantime the garden had its own extraordinary circumstances, and all here did not go on in the usual mode; for although the place was yet not laid out, and the April snow covered the earth and still hung in great masses on the low fruit-trees, which were the only wealth of the garden, yet these, not at all according to the commonly established laws of nature, were covered with fruit the most beautiful; rennets and oranges clustered the twigs, and shone in the sun. Exclamations were uttered in every *variety of tone*; and although both Jacobi and

Henrik protested that they could not discover any way of accounting for this supernatural phenomenon, still they did not escape the suspicion of being instrumental in the witchcraft, spite of all the means they used to establish their innocence. The opinion, however, was universally adopted, that good and not bad elves had been thus busily at work; and the fruit therefore was gathered without fear of bad consequences, and laid in baskets. The elves were praised, both in prose and verse; and there never was a merrier harvest-feast.

The judge had some trouble to get anybody to listen to all his plans of lilac-hedges, strawberry-beds, of his arbour, and his garden-house. The narrow space, however, in which he had to work troubled him.

"If one could only get possession of the piece of land beyond this!" striking with his stick upon the tall red-boarded fence which bounded one side of the garden. "Look here, Elise, peep through that gap; what a magnificent site it is for building—it extends down to the river! what a magnificent promenade it would make, properly laid out and planted! It might be a real treasure to the whole city, which needs a regular walk in its neighbourhood; and now it lies there desolate, and useful to nobody, but only for a few cows, because the proprietor does not know how to make use of it; and our good men of the city have not public spirit enough to purchase it out of the common fund for the general good. If I were but rich enough to buy the place, it should soon have a different appearance, and instead of cows human beings should be walking there; these boards should be torn down, and our garden should be united to the great promenade. What a situation it would be!"

"Would not beehives answer very well here!" asked our sensible Louise; "the sun strikes directly on these boards."

"You are perfectly right, Louise," said her father, well pleased, "that is a good thought; this is an excellent place for beehives: to-morrow I'll see about some. Two or three we must have, and that directly, that the bees may have the advantage of the apple and cherry bloom. Thus we can see them working altogether and learn wisdom from them, and watch how they collect honey for us. That will be a pleasure—don't you think so, Elise?"

Elise rejoiced sincerely over the bees, and over the garden. It would give her great pleasure to lay it out. She would set Provence-roses as soon as possible; and forcing houses also—they should soon be erected. Eva thought she should give herself up to gardening.

But it was necessary to leave for the present the future home of radishes and roses, because it was wet and uncomfortable out of doors.

Gabriele made large eyes when she saw the basketful of fruit which had been gathered in the garden. But the little princess Turandot could not unravel the riddle respecting them, as Henrik presented it to her.

The forenoon was spent in clearing away, and in arranging things in the house. Sara alone took no part in it, but took lessons on the harp from a distinguished young musician of the name of Black, who had come a stranger to the city. She sate the whole morning at her music, which she loved passionately; in the meantime, Petrea had promised to enact the part of lady's-maid to her, and to put all her clothes and things in order.

Henrik sate perfectly happy in his sisters' rooms, and nearly killed himself with laughing while he watched in part their clearing away and bustling about, and in part taking a share in all. The quantities of bundles of pieces, old bonnets, cloaks, dresses, etc. which were here in motion, and played their parts, formed a singular contrast to his student-world, in which such a thing as a piece of printed cotton or a pin might be reckoned quite a curiosity. Then the seriousness with which all these things were treated, and the jokes and merriment which arose out of all this seriousness, were for him most delicious things.

Nothing, however, amused him more than Louise and all her "properties," as well as the great care which, with a half-comic, half-grave earnestness, she took of them; but he declared he would disclaim all relationship with her if ever he should see her wearing a certain pale green shawl, called jokingly "spinage," and a pale grey dress, with the surname of "water-gruel." None of the sisters had so many possessions as Louise, and none treated them with so much importance; for she had in the highest degree that kind of turn which may be called a turn for accumulation. Her bandboxes and bundles burst themselves out of the space in which she wished to stow them, and came tumbling down upon her head. She accused Henrik of being guilty of these accidents; and certain it is, that he helped her, not without some mischievous pleasure, to put them up again in their places.

Louise was well known in the family for her love of what was old; the more shabby a dress was, the more distinguished she seemed to think it; and the more faded a shawl, the more, according to her, it resembled a Cashmere. This affection for old things extended itself sometimes to cakes, biscuits, creams, etc., which often occasioned Henrik to inquire whether an article of a doubtful date had its origin before or after the Flood. We will here add to the description of Louise a few touches, which may make the reader more fully acquainted with her character.

Pure was she both in heart and intention, with great love of truth, and a high moral sense, although too much given to lecturing, and somewhat a little wanting in charity towards erring fellow-mortals. She had much of her father's understanding and prudence, but came of course far short of him in knowledge of mankind and in experience, although now, in her eighteenth year, she considered herself to have a perfect knowledge of mankind. The moral worth of her soul mirrored itself in her exterior, which, without her being handsome, pleased, and inspired a degree of confidence in her, because good sense expressed itself in her calm glance, and her whole demeanour was that of a decided and well-balanced character. A certain comic humour in her would often dissolve her solemn mien and important looks into the most hearty laughter; and when Louise laughed, she bore a charming resemblance to her mother, for she possessed Elise's beautiful mouth and teeth.

She was as industrious as an ant, and in the highest degree helpful to those who were deserving of help, but less merciful than Lafontaine's ants were to thoughtless crickets and their fellows. Louise had three hobby-horses, although she never would confess that she had a single one. The first was to work tapestry; the sec-

ond, to read sermons; and the third, to play Patience, and more especially Postillion. A fourth had of late begun to discover itself, and that was for medicine—for the discovering and administering of useful family medicines; nay, she had herself decocted a certain elixir from nine bitter herbs, which Henrik declared would be very serviceable in sending people to the other world. Louise was no way disturbed by all this, for she did not allow herself to be annoyed by remarks.

She prized, enjoyed, and sought, above all things, after "the right;" but she also set a high value on respectability and property, and seemed to think that these were hers of course. She had the excellent habit of never undertaking any thing that she could not creditably get through with; but she had a great opinion of her own ability, in which her family participated, although they sometimes attempted to set her down. In the meantime she was in many instances the adviser and support of the family; and she had a real genius for the mighty department of housekeeping.

The parents called her, with a certain satisfaction—the father with a secret pride—"our eldest daughter." The sisters styled her rather waggishly "our eldest sister," and sometimes simply "our eldest;" and "our eldest" knew exceedingly well how to regard her own dignity in respect to rank and priority. Beyond this, she had a high idea of the value of woman.

Louise had an album, in which all her friends and acquaintance had written down their thoughts or those of others. It was remarkable what a mass of morality this book contained.

We fear that our readers may be somewhat weary of hearing the names of Sara, Louise, Eva, Leonore, Petrea, Gabriele, repeated so often one after another, and we are very sorry that we find it unavoidable yet once more to present the whole array in connexion with Louise. But we will see what little variety we can make by taking them at hap-hazard, and therefore now steps forward

PETREA.

We are all of us somewhat related to chaos. Petrea Frank was very nearly so. Momentary bursts of light and long periods of confusion alternated in her. There was a great dissimilarity between Louise and Petrea. While Louise required six drawers to contain her possessions, there needed scarcely half a one for the whole wardrobe of Petrea; and this said wardrobe too was always in such an ill-conditioned case, that it was, according to Louise, quite lamentable, and she not unfrequently lent a helping hand to its repair. Petrea tore her things, and gave away without bounds or discrimination, and was well-known in the sisterly circle for her bad management. Petrea had no turn for accumulation, on the contrary, she had truly, although Louise would not allow it, a certain turn for art.

She was always occupied by creations of one kind or another, either musical, or architectural, or poetical. But all her creations contained something of that which is usually called folly. At twelve years old she wrote her first romance, "Annette and Belis loved each other tenderly; they experienced adversity in their love; were at last however united, and lived henceforth in a charming cottage, surrounded with hedges of roses, and had eight children in one year," which we may call a very honourable beginning. A

year afterwards she began a tragedy, which was to be called "Gustavus Adolphus and Ebba Brahe," and which opened in the following manner:—

"Now from Germania's coast returned,
I see again the much-loved strand;
From war I come, without a wound,
Once more into my native land.
Say, Banner say, what woes have caused these tears, —
Am I not true to thee, or is it idle hope alone that will
befool my years?"

Whether no sheet of paper was broad enough to contain the lengthened lines, or any other cause interfered to prevent the completion of the piece, we know not; but certain it is that it was soon laid aside. Neither did a piece of a jocular nature, which was intended to emulate the fascinating muse of Madame Lenngren,* advance much farther—the beginning was thus:—

In the castle of Elpkästas,
Which lay in south, somewhere in Sweden,
There lived the lovely Melanis,
Sole daughter of the Count Sterneden.

At the present time Petrea was engaged on a poem, the title of which, written in large letters, ran thus—"The Creation of the World!"

The Creation of the World began thus—

CHAOS.

Once in the depths etern of darkness lying,
This mighty world
Waited expectantly the moments flying,
When light should be unfurled.
The world was nothing then, which now is given
To crowds of busy men;
And all our beautiful star-spangled heaven
Was desolate darkness then;
Yet He was there, who before time existed,
Who will endure for ever.

The creation of the world ceased with this faint glimmering of light, and was probably destined under Petrea's hand never to be brought forth from chaos. Petrea had an especially great inclination for great undertakings, and the misfortune to fail in them. This want of success always wounded her deeply, but in the next moment the impulse of an irresistibly vigorous temperament raised her above misfortune in some new attempt. Her young head was filled with a mass of half-formed thoughts, fancies, and ideas; her mind and her character were full of disquiet. At times joyous and wild beyond bounds, she became on the other hand wretched and dispirited without reason. Poor Petrea! she was wanting in every kind of self-regulation and ballast, even outwardly; she walked ill—she stood ill—she curtsied ill—sate ill, and dressed ill; and occasioned in consequence much pain to her mother, who felt so acutely whatever was displeasing; and this also was very painful to Petrea who had a warm heart, and who worshipped her mother.

Petrea also cherished the warmest affection and admiration for Sara, but her manner even of evidencing her affection was commonly so entirely without tact, as rather to displease than please the object of it. The consciousness of this fact embittered Petrea's life; but it conducted her by degrees to a love in which tact and address are of no consequence, and which is never unreturned.

Sometimes Petrea was seized with a strong consciousness of the chaoticness of her state; but then, again, at other times she would have

a presentiment that all this would clear itself away, and then that something which was quite out of the common way would come forth, and then she was accustomed to say, half in jest and half in earnest, to her sisters, "You'll see what I shall turn out sometime!" But in what this extraordinary turning out should consist nobody knew, and least of all poor Petrea herself. She glanced full of desire towards many suns, and was first attracted by one and then by another.

Louise had little faith in all Petrea's prophesyings, but the little Gabriele believed in them all. She delighted herself, moreover, so heartily in all that her sister began, that Petrea sacrificed to her her most beautiful gold-paper temple;—an original picture by herself of shepherdesses and altars; and her island of bliss in the middle of peaceful waters, and in the bay of which lay a little fleet of nut-shells, with rigging of silk, and laden with sugar-work, and from the motion of which, and the planting of its wonderful flowers, and glorious fruit-bearing trees, Petrea's heart had first had a foretaste of bliss.

Petrea's appearance imaged her soul;—for this too was variable; this too had its raptures; and here too at times also a glimmering light would break through the chaos. If the complexion were muddled and the nose red and swollen, she had a most ordinary appearance; but in cooler moments, and when the rose-hue confined itself merely to the cheeks, she was extremely good-looking; and sometimes too, and that even in her pleasant moments, there would be a gleam in her eye, and an expression in her countenance, which had occasioned Henrik to declare that Petrea was after all handsome.

To a chaotic mind, the desire for controversy is in-born; it is the conflict of the elements with each other. There was no subject upon which Petrea had not her conjectures, and nothing upon which she was not endeavouring to get a clear idea; on this account she discussed all things, and disputed with every one with whom she came in contact—reasoned, or more properly made confusion, on politics, literature, human free-will, the fine arts, or anything else; all which was very unpleasant to the tranquil spirit of her mother, and which, in connexion with want of tact, especially in her zeal to be useful, made poor Petrea the laughing-stock of every one; a bitter punishment this, on earth, although before the final judgment-seat of very little, or of no consequence at all.

LEONORE.

Spite of the mother's embraces, and the appellation, "their beloved, plain child!" the knowledge by degrees had come painfully to Leonore that she was ugly, and that she was possessed of no charm—of no fine endowment whatever; she could not help observing what little means she had of giving pleasure to others, or of exciting interest; she saw very plainly how she was set behind her more gifted sisters by the acquaintance and friends of the family; this, together with feeble health, and the discomfort which her own existence occasioned to her, put her in a discordant state with life and mankind. She was prone to think every thing troublesome and difficult; she fell easily into a state of opposition to her sisters, and her naturally quick temper led her often

* Anna Lenngren, a distinguished Swedish poetess, admired especially for her Idylls. She died in 1817.

into contentions which were not without their bitterness. All this made poor Leonore feel herself very unhappy.

But none—no, none—suffer in vain; however for a while it may appear so. Suffering is the plough which turns up the field of the soul, into whose deep furrows the all-wise Husbandman scatters his heavenly seed; and in Leonore, also, it already began to sprout, although, as yet, only under the earth. She was not aware of it herself yet, but all that she experienced in life, together with the spirit which prevailed in her family, had already awakened the beauty of her soul. She was possessed of deep feeling, and the consciousness of her many wants made her, by degrees, the most unpretending and humble of human beings; and these are virtues which, in private life, cannot be exceeded. If you come near a person of this character, the influence on you is as if you came out of the sun's heat into refreshing shadow, a soft coolness was wafted over your soul, which refreshes and tranquilizes you at the same time.

In the period at which we have now to meet Leonore, she had just recovered from the scarlet fever, which had left behind it such an obstinate and oppressive head-ache as compelled her almost constantly to remain in her own room; and although her parents and her sisters visited her there, it afforded her but little pleasure, for as yet she had not learned how, by goodness and inward kindness, to make herself agreeable to others.

But, poor Leonore! when I see thee sitting there in deep thought, thy weak head supported by thy hand, I am ready to lay thy head on my bosom, and to whisper a prophesying into thy ear—but this may as well remain to a future time. We leave thee now, but will return another time to thy silent chamber.

And now step forth, thou, the joy and ornament of home, the beautiful

EVA!

Eva was called in the family, "our rose," "our beauty." There are many in the world like Eva, and it is well that it is so; they are of a pleasing kind. It is delightful to look upon these blooming young girls, with smiles on their lips, and goodness and joy of life beaming from their beautiful eyes. All wish them so well, and they wish so well to all; every thing good in life seems as if it came from themselves. They have favourable gales in life—it was so with Eva. Even her weakness, a desire to please, which easily went too far, and an instability of character which was very dangerous to her, exhibited themselves only on their pleasing side, within the circle of her family and of her acquaintance, and helped to make her more beloved.

Eva, although, perhaps, strictly speaking, not beautiful, was yet blooming lovely. Her eyes were not large, but were of the most exquisite form, and of the clearest dark blue colour, and their glance from under their long black lashes was at once modest, lively, and amiable. The silky chestnut brown hair was parted over a not lofty but classically-formed brow. Her skin was white, fine, and transparent, and the mouth and teeth perfectly beautiful; add to all this, Eva had the fine figure of her mother, with her light and graceful action. Excellent health, the happiest temper, and a naturally well-tuned soul, gave a beautiful and harmonious expres-

sion to her whole being. Whatever she did, she did well, and with grace; and whatever she wore became her; it was a kind of proverb in the family, that if Eva were to put a black cat upon her head it would be becoming.

A similarity in understanding and talent, as well as companionship together, had made Louise and Eva hitherto "*les inseparables*," both at home and abroad; of late, however, without separating herself from Louise, Eva had been drawn, as it were, by a secret power to Leonore. Louise, with all her possessions, was so sufficient for herself. Leonore was so solitary, so mournful, up there, that the good heart of Eva was tenderly drawn towards her.

But it seems to us as if Gabriele looks rather poutingly, because she has been so long, as it were, pushed aside. We will therefore hastily turn to—

THE LITTLE LADY.

It did not please our little lady to be neglected at all. Gabriele was in truth a spoiled child, and often made "*la pluie*," and the "*beau temps*," in the house. She was defended from cold, and wind, and rain, and vexation, and faddled with and indulged in all possible ways, and praised and petted as if for the best behaviour, if she were only gracious enough to take a cup of bouillon, or the wing of a chicken for dinner. She herself is still like the chicken under the mother's wing; yet she will sometimes creep from under, and attempt little flights on her own account. Then she is charming and merry, makes enigmas and charades, which she gives to her mother and Petrea to guess. It gives her particular pain to be treated as a little girl; and nothing worse can happen to her than for the elder sisters to say, "Go out just for a little while, Gabriele dear!" in order that they may then impart to each other some important affair, or read together some heart-rending novel. She will willingly be wooed and have homage paid to her; and the Assessor is always out of favour with her, because he jokes with her, and calls her little Miss "Curled-pate," and other such ugly names.

Learning and masters are no affairs of hers. She loves a certain "*far niente*," and on account of delicate health, her tastes are indulged. Her greatest delight is in dancing, and in the dance she is captivating. In opposition to Petrea, she has a perfect horror of all great undertakings; and in opposition to Louise, a great disinclination to sermons, be they by word of mouth, or printed. The sun, the warm wind, flowers, but, above all, beloved and amiable human beings, make Gabriele feel most the goodness of the Creator, and awaken her heart to worship.

She has a peculiar horror of death, and will neither hear it, nor indeed anything else dark or sorrowful, spoken of; and, happily for Gabriele, true parental love has a strong resemblance to the Midsummer sun of the North, which shines as well by night as by day.

If we turn from the bright-haired Gabriele to Sara, to "that Africa," as the Assessor called her, we go from day to night. Sara was like a beautiful dark cloud in the house—like a winter night, with its bright stars, attractive, yet at the same time repulsive. To us, nevertheless, she will become clear, since we possess the key to her soul, and can observe it in the following

NOTICES FROM SARA'S JOURNAL.

"Yesterday evening Macbeth was read aloud,

they all trembled before Lady Macbeth: I was silent, for she pleased me; there was power in the woman."

"Life! what is life? When the tempest journeys through space on strong pinions, it sings to me a song which finds an echo in my soul. When the thunder rolls, when the lightning flames, then I divine something of life in its strength and greatness. But this tame everyday life—little virtues, little faults, little cares, little joys, little endeavours—this contracts and stifles my spirit. O! thou flame which consumest me, what wilt thou? There are moments in which thou illuminest, but eternities in which thou tormentest and burnest me!"

"This narrow sphere satisfies them; they find interest in a thousand trifles; they are able to deny themselves in order to obtain little enjoyments for each other. It may do for them, I was made for something different."

"Why should I obey? Why should I submit my inclination—my will, to gratify others?—Why? Ah, freedom—freedom!"

"I have obtained 'Volney's Ruins' from B—. I conceal the book from these pious fearful people; but to-night!—to night!—when their eyes are closed in sleep, mine shall wake and read it. The frontispiece to this book gives me extraordinary pleasure: a wreck combats with stormy waves; the moon goes down amid black clouds; on the shore, among the ruins of a temple, sits a Mussulman—a beautiful and thoughtful figure—and surveys the scene. I likewise observe it, and an agreeable shudder passes through me. A vast ruin is better and far more beautiful than a small and an empty happiness."

"The book pleases me. It expresses what was long lain silent in me. It gives clear light to my dark anticipations. Ah! what a day dawns upon me! A dazzling light that clears away all misty illusions, but my eyes are strong enough to bear it! Let the net of prejudice, let the miserable bond of custom be rent asunder, let the fettering supports fall! my own strength is sufficient for me."

"Why am I a woman? As a man, my life and my conduct would have been clear and easy; as a woman, I must bow myself in order to clear myself. Miserable dependence! Miserable lot of woman!"

"I do not love—but he makes a certain impression upon me. The dark strength in his eye pleases me, the reckless strong will, that will bow itself only to me; and when he takes the harp in his arms, with what powerful strength he compels it to express all that which the heart only dreams! Then he grasps the strings of my heart—then I acknowledge in him my master."

"But never, he shall never govern me; his spirit is not powerful enough for that. He never can be other to me than as a means to my end. Nor will I herein deceive him. I am too proud for a hypocrite. I know well whom I could love. I know well the man who could be the aim of my ambition."

"Nature never created me for this narrow sphere—for this narrow foot-track through life. B. shows me another, which captivates my mind: I feel that I am created for it."

"I have observed myself in the glass, and it tells me, as well the glance of mankind, that I

am handsome. My growth is strong, and accords with the character of my countenance. I cannot doubt the assurance of B. My person, in connexion with the powers of my mind and my talent, will ensure me a brilliant future."

"What purpose would it serve to create illusions? Away with all illusions! I stand upon a higher point than those around me—than they who consider themselves entitled to censure my faults, to exalt themselves in secret above me; perhaps because they have taken me out of compassion! Subjecting, humiliating thought!"

"Yet, at the same time, they are good; yes, angelically good to me. I wish they were less so!"

"To-night, now for the second time in my life, I have had the same extraordinary dream. It appeared to me that I was in my chamber, and saw in heaven vast masses of black cloud above my head, driving towards the horizon, accompanied with a strong rushing sound in the air.

"Save thyself, Sara!" cried the voices of my sisters; "come, come with us!" But I felt in my limbs that peculiar sluggishness which one perceives in dreams when one wishes to hasten. My chamber-window flew open before the tempest, and impelled by a strong curiosity I looked out. The sun stood opposite to me, pale and watery, but the air around me seemed to burn: a glow of fire passed over all things. Before me stood a tall aspen, whose leaves trembled and crackled, while sparks of fire darted forth from them. Upon one twig of the tree sat a large blackbird, looking on me with a fiery glance, and singing hoarse and tunelessly, while the tempest and flame rioted around him. I heard the voices of my adopted mother and sisters anxiously calling on me from a distance ever farther and farther removed.

"I leaned myself out of the window to hear what the blackbird with the wonderful voice sang. I no longer had any fear. I awoke; but the dream has a charm for me."

"The blackbird sings of me otherwise than in my dream. My adopted mother has wept to-day on my account. I am sorry for it, but—it is best that I go. They do not love me here—they cannot do it. They do not need me, nor I them, any longer. It is best that we separate."

Thus Sara:

We will now cast a glance on the parents themselves, who were not greatly altered, excepting that Elise's whole appearance exhibited much more health and strength than formerly. The energetic countenance of the Judge had more wrinkles, but it had, besides, an expression of much greater gentleness. A slight, but, perhaps, not wholly unpardonable weakness might be observed in him. He was completely captivated with his daughters. God bless the good father!

CHAPTER XVII.

THE OBJECT.

We must now say how the family grouped themselves in the new house. Since the arrival of Henrik and Jacobi, the liveliness of the family had visibly increased. Henrik zealously followed up his purpose of making his sisters take

more active exercise, and Jacobi assisted him with his whole heart. Long walks were arranged, but, to Henrik's annoyance, it seldom was possible to induce Louise to take exercise of that kind which, according to his opinion, she needed so much. Louise had always such a vast deal to do at home; Sara lived only for her harp and her singing; Leonore was not strong enough; and for Gabriele, it was generally either too cold or too dirty, or too windy, or she was not in the humour to walk. Eva, on the contrary, was always in the humour, and Petrea had always the desire to speed away. It was Henrik's greatest pleasure to give one of his sisters his arm, especially when they were well and handsomely dressed.

At seven o'clock in the evening all the members of the family assembled themselves in the library, where the tea-table was prepared, at which Louise presided. The evenings were uncommonly cheerful, particularly when the family were alone. Between tea and supper, they either talked, or read aloud, or had music; after supper they danced, and then Louise exercised herself with remarkable grace. Sometimes they had charades or social games. Henrik and Petrea had always some new flash of merriment or other. It was the greatest delight of the Judge to see all his children around him, especially in an evening, and to see them happy too. The door of his study, which adjoined the library, always stood open in an evening, and whether he read or wrote there, he still was conscious of all that went forward among them. Sometimes he would come out and take part in their entertainment, or would sit on the green sofa beside his wife, and watch the dance, rejoicing himself over his daughters, and sometimes was even taken out into the dance by them.

The young people remarked, that whatever might for the time occupy Jacobi, he was somewhat absent and incomprehensible; he sighed frequently, and seemed rather to enjoy quiet conversation with the ladies, than charades and other amusements. It was discovered, between Henrik and Petrea, that these fits of absence, and these sighs, must have an object; but it was a long time, that is to say, three or four days, before they could decide who it really was.

"It cannot be our mother," said Petrea, "because she is married; and besides this, she is so much older than any of us, although prettier than all of us together; and though Master Jacobi has such pleasure in talking with her, and conducts himself towards her as if he were her son, still it cannot be she. Do you know, Henrik, I fancy Sara is the object—he looks at her so much; or perhaps Eva, for he is always so lively with her; and I heard him say yesterday to Mr. Munter, that she was so uncommonly charming. But it is rather improper that he should pass 'our eldest' so!"

Henrik was greatly amused by Petrea's difficulty and conjectures, for he had his own peculiar notions about the object; and by degrees Petrea herself began to have a clearer foreknowledge, and to think that perhaps, after all, the true object might be no other than "our eldest" herself. After this insight into things, which Petrea was not slow in circulating among her sisters, Louise was called in their jocular phraseology, "the object." All this while, however,

"the object" herself appeared to pay very little attention to the speculations which had thus reference to herself. Louise was at the present time greatly occupied by setting up a piece of weaving, and had in consequence, greatly to Henrik's horror, brought again into use the dress surnamed "water-gruel;" and as it happened, moreover, that the piece of weaving was of a pattern which was much perplexed and difficult to arrange, she assumed almost constantly the "cathedral demeanour," which occasioned her to look all the less attractive. But so things stood, Jacobi looked a great deal at Sara, joked with Eva, and remained sitting beside Louise, as if he found by her side only true happiness and satisfaction.

In vain did Petrea draw him into all kind of controversial subjects, in order to make him, during the contest, somewhat forgetful of "the object." He did not become abstracted; and it was particularly observable, that the Master had much less desire for disputation than the Candidate had had; and when Mrs. Gunilla took the field against him more than once with a whole host of monads and nomads, he only laughed. Now, indeed, Jacobi had a favourite topic of conversation, and that was his Excellence D. The distinguished personal qualities of his Excellence, his noble character, his goodness, his spirit, his imposing exterior, could not be sufficiently celebrated and exalted by Jacobi; nay, even his lion-like forehead, his strong glance, and his beautiful patrician hands, were many a time described.

Jacobi had for some time been attached to his Excellence as his secretary, and he had now the hope of his assistance in his future prospects. In the meantime, his Excellence had shown him the greatest kindness; had given him many opportunities of increasing his knowledge, and had offered to take him with him on a journey into foreign countries; besides all which, he had himself practised him in French. In one word, Excellence D. was the most excellent excellence in all the world, an actual *excolectiasimus*. Jacobi was devoted to him heart and soul, and was rich in anecdotes about Excellence D., and in anecdotes which his Excellence had told.

Louise, more than any member of the family, had the property of being a good listener, and therefore she heard more than any one else of his Excellence D., but yet not alone of him; Jacobi had always something to relate to her—a something on which he wanted her consideration—and if Louise were not too much occupied with her thoughts about the evening, he was always quite sure, not only of her sincere sympathy, but of her most deliberate judgment, as well on moral questions as on questions of economical arrangement, dress, plans for the future, and so forth. He himself imparted to her good advice—which, however, was not often followed—for playing Postillion. He drew patterns for her embroidery, and read aloud to her gladly, and that novels in preference to sermons.

But he was not long permitted to sit in peace by her side, for very soon the seat on the other side of her was occupied by a person, who, in all due respect, we will call "the Landed-proprietor," from the distinguished circumstance of his possessing an estate in the neighbourhood of the city.

The Landed-proprietor appeared to the Candidate—we will for the future adhere to this our old appellation, for in a certain sense, in this world all men are Candidates—to him, therefore, it seemed as if the new-comer were quite disposed to make a quarrel about the place he was inclined to take.

Beside his large estate, the Landed-proprietor was possessed of a large body, round cheeks, plump from excess of health, a pair of large gray eyes remarkable for their unmeaning expression, a little ruddy mouth which preferred eating rather than speaking, which laughed without meaning, and which now directed to cousin Louise—he considered himself related to her father—sundry speeches which we will string together in our next chapter.

CHAPTER XVIII.

STRANGE QUESTIONS.

"Cousin Louise, are you fond of fish? for example, bream?" asked the Landed-proprietor one evening as he seated himself beside Louise, who was industriously working a landscape in her embroidery frame.

"O yes! bream is very good fish," replied she, very phlegmatically, and without looking up from her work.

"O, with red-wine sauce," said the Landed-proprietor, "delicate! I have magnificent fishing on my estate at Oestanvik. Big fellows of bream! I catch them myself."

"Who is that great-fisher there?" asked Jacobi, with an impatient sneer, "and what matters it to him whether Louise likes bream?"

"Because in that case she might like him *mon cher*," replied Henrik; "a most respectable is my cousin Thure of Oestanvik. I advise you to cultivate his acquaintance. Well, now, Gabriele dear, what wants your highness!—I shall lose my head about the riddle—Mamma dear, come and help your stupid son!"

"No, no, mother knows it already! Mother must not tell," exclaimed Gabriele, terrified.

"What king do you set up above all other kings, Master Jacobi?" for the second time asked Petrea, who this evening had a sort of question-mania.

"Charles the Thirteenth," replied he, and listened to Louise's answer to the Landed-proprietor.

"Cousin Louise, are you fond of birds?" asked the Landed-proprietor.

"O yes, particularly of fieldfares," answered Louise.

"Nay, that's capital!" said the Landed-proprietor. "There are innumerable fieldfares on my estate of Oestanvik. I often go out myself with my gun and shoot enough for dinner; piff-paff! with two shots I have killed a whole dish-full!"

"Don't you imagine, Master Jacobi, that the people before the Flood were much wickeder than those of our time?" asked Petrea, who wished to occupy the Candidate, nothing deterred by his evident abstraction, and whom nobody had asked if she liked fieldfares.

"O much, much better," answered Jacobi.

"Cousin Louise, are you fond of roast hare?" asked the Landed-proprietor.

"Master Jacobi, are you fond of roast hare?" whispered Petrea waggishly to the Candidate.

"Bravo, Petrea!" whispered her brother to her.

"Cousin Louise, are you fond of cold meat?" asked the Landed-proprietor, as he handed Louise to the supper-table.

"Should you like to be a landed-proprietor?" whispered Henrik to her as she left it.

Louise answered exactly as a cathedral would have answered—looked very solemn, and was silent.

Petrea, like something let quite loose, after supper, would not let anybody remain quiet who by any possibility could be made to answer her. "Is reason sufficient for mankind?" asked she.

"What is the foundation of morals? What is the proper meaning of revelation? Why is the nation always so badly off? Why must there be rich and poor?" etc., etc.

"Dear Petrea," said Louise, "what can be the use of asking such questions?"

It was an evening for questions, there was not even an end of them when people separated for the night.

"Do you not think," asked the Judge from his wife when they were alone together, "that our little Petrea begins to be quite disagreeable with her perpetual questions and disputations? She leaves nobody at peace, and is at times in a sort of unceasing disquiet. She will, some time or other, make herself quite ridiculous if she goes on so."

"Yes," replied Elise, "if she goes on so; but I think she will not. I have observed Petrea narrowly for some time, and do you know I fancy there is something out of the common way in that young girl."

"Yes, yes," said he, "in the common way she certainly is not; the merriment and the everlasting joviality which she occasions, and the occasions, and the comical devices that she has—"

"Yes," replied the mother, "do they not indicate a decided turn for art? And then she has a remarkable thirst for knowledge. Every morning she is up between three and four, in order to read or write, or to work at her Creation. It is, in fact, quite uncommon; and may not this unrest, this zeal to question and dispute, arise from a sort of intellectual hunger? Ah! many a woman suffers deeply through the whole of her life, because this, their intellectual hunger, has not been appeased. Unrest, discontentedness, nay, innumerable faults, spring from want of intellectual culture."

"I believe you are right, Elise," said her husband; "and no condition in life is more melancholy, particularly in advanced years. But this shall not be the lot of my Petrea—that we will prevent. What do you think, now, would be good for her?"

"I fancy," said Elise, "that a course of serious and well-directed study would assist in regulating her mind. She is too much left to her self, with her disarranged bent—with her enthusiasm and her attempts. I myself have too little knowledge to instruct her, you have too little time, and there is no one here who would take the guidance of her young, unsettled mind. I am sometimes extremely grieved about her; for her sisters do not understand the workings of

her mind, which I must confess sometimes gives me pain. I wish I were better able to help her. Petrea requires a ground on which to take her stand—as yet, she has none; her thoughts require some firm holding-place; from the want of this comes her unrest. She is like a flower without roots, which is driven about by wind and wave."

"She shall be firmly rooted; she shall find firm ground to stand upon, if such is to be found in the world!" said the Judge, with a grave yet beaming eye, and striking his hand at the same time with such violence on a volume West-Gotha law, that it fell to the ground. "We will think about it," continued he; "Petrea is yet too young for one to say with certainty what is her decided bent; but we will strengthen her powers; she shall no longer know hunger of any kind, so long as I live and can get my own bread. You know my friend, the excellent Bishop B——. Perhaps we can at first confide Petrea to his guidance. After a few years we shall—as yet she is only a child. But don't you think we might speak with Jacobi, whether he could not read with her and talk with her—apropos! how is it with Jacobi? I fancy he begins to think about Louise."

"Yes, yes, you are not wrong," said Elise; "and our cousin Thure of Oestavik—have you remarked nothing there?"

"Yes, I did remark something," replied he. "What stupid questions those were which he asked her! 'Do you like this?' or, 'Do you like that?' But I don't like this! Louise is not yet grown up, and why should people come with such questions? Nay, perhaps after all it means nothing; that would please me best. What a pity it is, however, that our cousin Thure is not more of a man! A most beautiful estate he has, and so in the neighbourhood!"

"Yes, a pity," said Elise; "because such as he is now, I am quite convinced Louise would find it impossible to endure him."

"You do not think she would like Jacobi?" asked the father.

"To tell the truth," returned she, "I think it probable she might."

"Nay," said he, "that would be very unpleasant and very imprudent; I am very fond of Jacobi, but he has nothing, and he is nothing."

"But, my love," reasoned his wife, "he may become something, and he may get something. I confess, dear Ernst, that he would suit Louise better for a husband than almost any one else, and I would willingly call him son."

"Would you, Elise?" exclaimed the Judge, "then I suppose I must prepare myself to do the same. You have had most trouble, most labour with the children, and you have, therefore, most to say in their affairs."

"You are so good, Ernst," said Elise.

"Say reasonable—nothing more than reasonable," said he; "beyond this I have the belief that our thoughts and inclinations do not differ much. I confess that I consider Louise as a great treasure, and I know nobody whom I should favour from my own heart; still, if Jacobi obtains her affections, I could not find in my heart to oppose a union between them, although, on account of uncertain prospects, it would make me anxious. I am much attached to Jacobi, and, on Henrik's account, we have much to thank him for. His

excellent heart, his honesty, his good qualities, will make him as good a citizen as husband and father, and he belongs at the same time to that class of persons with whom it is most pleasant to have daily intercourse. But, God forbid! I am talking just as if I wished the union, and I am a long way from that yet. I would much rather keep my daughters with me as long as they could feel themselves happy with me; but when girls grow up, one cannot reckon on peace. I wish all wooers and question-askers at Jericho! Now, we could live here as in a kingdom of bliss, since we have got all into such nice order—some little improvements, it is true, I could make yet. I have been thinking that we could so easily make a wardrobe-room if—here at this wall. How, my love, are you asleep already?"

CHAPTER XIX.

AN INVITATION.

ABOUT this time the sisters of the house began to dream a great deal about conflagrations, and there was no end of the meanings of dreams, hints, little jokes, and communications among the sisters, none of whom dreamt more animated or more significant dreams than Petrea. Gabriele, who in her innocence did not dream at all, wondered what all this extraordinary talk about conflagration meant; but she could not learn much, for as often as she desired to have her part in the mysteries, it was said "Go out for a little while, Gabriele dear."

One evening, Sara, Louise, Eva, and Petrea, were sitting together at a little table, where they were deep in the discussion of something which seemed to possess extraordinary interest for them, when Gabriele came and asked just for a little place at the table for herself and her books; but it was impossible, there was no room for the little one. Almost at the same moment Jacobi and Henrik came up; they too sought for room at the circle of young ladies, and now see! there was excellent room for them both, whereupon Gabriele stuck her little head between Louise and Petrea, and prayed her sisters to solve the following riddle.

"What is that at which six places may be found, but not five?"

The sisters laughed; Louise kissed the little refined moralist; and Petrea left the table, the gentlemen, and a political discussion which she had begun with Henrik, in order to sit on one side and relate to Gabriele the Travels of Theodolf, which was one of the greatest enjoyments of our little lady.

"Apropos!" cried Henrik, "will there not be a wedding celebrated the day after to-morrow, to which we ought naturally to be invited.—N.B. Aunt Evelina has far less genius than I gave her credit for if —"

"Aunt Evelina stands here now ready, if possible, to vindicate her genius," said a friendly voice, and, to the amazement of all, Aunt Evelina stood in the middle of the room.

After the first salutations and questions, Evelina presented an invitation, not as Henrik expected for the marriage, but for the entertainment after the marriage.

Laura's marriage with Major G. was to be

celebrated in the quietest manner, at her adopted mother's house, and only in the presence of a few relations. But the mother of the bridegroom, one of those joyous persons who in a remarkable manner lighten the world of its cares—and for which the world thanks them so little—one of those who, if possible, would entertain and make glad all mankind, and whom mankind on that account very willingly slanders—she, the stout and cordial widow of a Councillor of War, was determined to celebrate the marriage of her only and beloved son in a festive and cheerful manner, and to make the whole country partakers of the joy which she herself felt.

The great marriage-festival was to last eight days, and already the great doors of Axelholme were standing wide open to receive a considerable party of the notables of the place. The bride and bridegroom were to invite their respective friends and acquaintances, and commissioned now by the bride and her future mother-in-law, Evelina brought a written invitation from her; she came now to beseech the family, the whole family, Jacobi included, to honour the festivity with their presence; above all things, desiring that all the daughters might come,—every one of them was wanted for one thing or another; they reckoned on Petrea, she said, who had a great turn for theatricals, to take a character in a play which was to be acted; and the others were wanted for dancing and for *tableaux vivants*. Gabriele must allow herself to be made an angel of—and naturally they hoped, that out of all this the young people would find amusement.

They wished and prayed that the whole family would establish themselves at Axelholme, where everything was prepared for their dancing the whole time of the festival, and if possible still longer, and they hoped to make the stay there quite agreeable to every member of the family.

Pitt, Fox, Thiers, Lafitte, Platen, Ankursward—nay, one may even assert that all the orators in the world, never made speeches which were considered more beautiful by their hearers, nor which were received with warmer or more universal enthusiasm than this little oration of Aunt Evelina's. Henrik threw himself on his knee before the excellent, eloquent aunt; Eva clapped her hands and embraced her; Petrea cried aloud in a fit of rapture, and in leaping up threw down a work-table on Louise; Jacobi made an *entrechat*, freed Louise from the work-table, and engaged her for the first *anglaise*.

The Judge, glad from his heart that his children should have so much enjoyment, was obliged, for his part, to give up the joyful festivity. Business! Judge Frank had seldom time for anything but business; yet he would manage it so that at least he would take them there, and on the following day he would return. Elise sent back her compliments, but could not take more than two, or at most three of her daughters with her; Evelina, however, overruled this, as did also her husband, who insisted that they all should go.

"Perhaps," said he, "they may never have such another opportunity to enjoy themselves."

Seldom, indeed, does it happen that people ask and pray and counsel a mother to take all

her six daughters with her. Long may such counsellors live! but then it must be acknowledged, that the daughters of the Franks were universally beloved on account of their kind, agreeable manners, and their many good qualities.

Elise must promise to take them all with her—Sara, Louise, Eva, Leon—no! It is true Leonore could not go with her; the poor Leonore must remain at home, on account of indisposition; and very soon, therefore, Eva and Petrea emulated each other as to which should remain with her. Leonore declared coldly and peevishly that nobody should stay at home on her account; she needed nobody; she would much rather be alone; the sisters might all go without hesitation; there was no fear of her not living through it! Poor Leonore had become changed by her sickness and her sedentary life;—her better self had become hidden under a cloud of vexation and illhumour, which chilled the kindness and friendliness that people otherwise would have shown to her.

In the mean time there was a stir among the young people of the family; for much had to be bought, much to be made, and much to be put in order, that they might be able to make an honourable appearance at the marriage festival. What a review was there then of dresses, flowers, ribbons, gloves, etc.! what counsel-taking and projects regarding the new purchases! what calculations, so that the present of money which the good father had, all unsolicited, made to each daughter might not be exceeded. Louise was invaluable to everybody; she had counsel and contrivances for everybody; besides all this, she was unwearied in shopping, and never disheartened in buying. She made very few compliments to any shopkeeper or shopkeeper's assistants, and let them open everything they had if she only wanted an ell of cloth; and would leave eleven different places without making a purchase, if at the twelfth she could get a piece of ribbon cheaper or of better quality: she paid great regard to *quality*. According to her own opinion, as well as that of her family, she was an excellent hand at getting good bargains; that is, for obtaining good wares at unheard-of low prices. With all this our Louise was held in great consideration in all the shops of the city, and was served with the greatest zeal and respect; whilst, on the contrary, Petrea, who never bargained about anything, at all events when she was alone, was not esteemed in the least, and always obtained bad, and at the same time dear goods. True it is that Petrea went a shopping as little as possible: whilst Louise, on the contrary, who took the difficult part of Commissioner for all her friends and acquaintance, was about as much at home in a shop as in her own wardrobe.

It was unanimously decided that Sara, Louise, and Eva, should all wear the same dress on the evening of the great ball at Axelholme, which would be given on the day they arrived there; namely, that they should wear white muslin dresses, with pale pink sashes, and roses in their hair. Petrea was delighted by this project, and did not doubt but that her sisters would be universally known by the appellation of "the three Graces." For her own part, she would willingly have been called Venus: but alas! that was not

to be thought of. She studied her face in all the glasses in the house. "It is not so very bad-looking," thought she, "if the nose were only different." Petrea was to appear at the ball in sky-blue; and "the little lady" was quite enraptured by the rose-coloured gauze dress which her mother was making for her.

The toilette occupied every one, body and soul.

CHAPTER XX.

CONFUSION.

A FINE mizzling rain fell without; and Jacobi, with secret horror, beheld Louise equipped in the "court-preacher," which became her so ill, ready to go out with Eva, under shelter of "the family roof," in order to make good bargains. In the mean time Sara took her music lesson with Schwartz, but had promised Petrea to go out with her in the afternoon, in order to make good bargains likewise.

"Henrik," said Jacob to his young friend, "I fancy that we too are going out on a 'good bargain' expedition. I want a pair of gloves, and—"

"And perhaps we shall meet the sisters in the shop," said Henrik, waggishly.

"Quite right," returned Jacobi, smiling; "but, Henrik, cannot you tell your sister Louise that she should not wear that horrible black cloak? I declare she does not look as—indeed she does not look well in it."

"Don't you think that I have told her so already?" replied Henrik. "I have preached so long against the 'court-preacher,' that he ought long ago to have been banished from respectable society: but it is all to no purpose. He has worked himself so completely into the good graces of our gracious eldest sister, that we must endure him all our lives long. And what think you—I almost fancy our cousin of Oestankvik likes him!"

"Nay," said Jacobi, "one can very well see that that creature has a wretched taste—a true Hottentot taste!"

"And for that reason," remarked Henrik, "he may like Louise."

"Hem!" said Jacobi.

At dinner-time the bargaining young ladies came back, attended by the bargaining gentlemen, who had, after all, gone about in peaceful company with the court-preacher. Louise was quite full of glory; never in her whole life before had she made such good bargains.

"Look, sisters," said she, "this muslin for a crown-banco* the ell! Is it not a charming colour? I have saved in it alone twelve shillings.† And see these ribbons which I have got for four-and-twenty shillings—the ell—thirty were asked. Are they not beautiful?—will they not look magnificently?—is it not a real discovery?—did you ever hear of anything like it? Sara, if you will go to the same shop as I do, you will get all at the same price. I have made that agreement for you at three places, at Bergvalls, and at Aströms, and at Madame Florea's for the flowers."

Sara thanked her, but said she had altered her plans; she did not intend to have the same dress as Louise and Eve, but another which pleased her better.

The sisters were rather astonished; Louise quite offended. Had they not already agreed about it? What was to become of the Three Graces?

Sara answered, that the third Grace might be whoever she would, but for her part she should not have that honour.

The sisters thought her very ungracious.

Eva ran up to Leonore in order to show her her purchases.

"Look at this rose, Leonore," said she, "is it not very pretty? just as if it were natural—and these ribbons!"

"Yes, yes," said Leonore, with a depressed voice, regarding these ornaments with a gloomy look; and then, pushing them from her so hastily that they fell on the floor, burst into tears. Eva was quite concerned; a book had fallen on her beautiful rose and had crushed it. For one moment Eva shed tears over her flower, the next over her sister.

"Why have you done so, Leonore," said she, "you must be very ill, or are you displeased with me?"

"No, no!" said poor Leonore, "forgive me and leave me."

"Why?" asked Eva. "Ah, do not weep—do not distress yourself. It was quite thoughtless of me to come here and—. But I will bid farewell to all the magnificence—I will not go to the ball, I will stop at home with you, only tell me that you love me, and that you would like me to do so—just say so—say so!"

"No, no," said Leonore, passionately, and turning away from the affectionate comforter, "I do not like it! You tease me, all of you, with this talk of stopping at home on my account. I know very well that I am not such as any one would wish to please—I am neither merry nor good. Go, Eva, to those who are merry, and follow them. Leave me, leave me in peace, that is all that I desire."

Eva retired weeping, and with the crushed rose in her hand.

In the afternoon, when Petrea was ready to go out on the promised expedition, she found Sara also was in an ill-humour. She would go—but only on Petrea's account; she had no intention of buying anything; she had not money enough wherewith to make purchases; she would not go to the festival; she could not have any pleasure if she did; nothing in the world gave one any pleasure when one had not things exactly to one's own wishes.

Petrea was quite confounded by this sudden change, and sought in all possible ways to discover the cause of it.

"But why," asked she, with tears in her eyes, "will you not go with us?"

"Because I will not go," answered Sara, "if I cannot go with honour and in my own way! I will not be mixed up in a mass of every-day-mediocre people! It is in my power to become distinguished and uncommon; my character is of that kind. I will not live to be trammelled—I would rather not live at all!"

"Ah!" exclaimed Petrea, who now comprehended what was working in Sara, whilst her eyes flashed with sudden joy. "Ah, is it nothing more than that? Dear Sara, take all that I possess—take it, I beseech you! Do you not believe that it gives me a thousand times the pleasure if I see you happy and beautiful than if I possessed the most glorious things in the world. Take it, best, dearest Sara! I pray you,

* Crown-banco, equal to one shilling and sixpence English money.

† A shilling Swedish is equal to about one farthing English.

on my knees, to take it, and then if there be enough you can buy what you like and go with us—else the whole splendour will be good for nothing!"

"Ah, Petrea, and you?" asked Sara.

"Ah," said Petrea, "I'll just furbish up my gauze dress, and keep a little money for some ribbon, and then all is done, and as for the rest it does not matter how I look. Be only contented, Sara, and do as I bid you."

"But may I? Can I?" asked Sara. "Ah, no, Petrea, I could not do it! The little that you have! and after all it would not be sufficient."

"Ah, yes," said Petrea, "make it sufficient. We can go to Louise's shops, and one gets everything so cheap there. I shall never be happy again if you do not do as I pray you: see now, you are my good, dear Sara! Thank you, thank you! Now my heart is light! Now I need not trouble myself about my toilette, and that is an advantage."

The bird that sits on the swinging bough felt not lighter of mood than did Petrea as she went out with Sara, who was far less cheerful, but who still had never been more friendly towards Petrea.

The end of Petrea's purchase of ribbon was this:—In passing a gingerbread-booth she saw a little chimney-sweeper, who was casting the most loving glances on some purple-red apples, and Petrea, with the money in her hand, could not resist the desire of making him a present of them, and felt more than rewarded as she saw the boy's white teeth shining forth from their black neighbourhood, first in smiles and then biting into the juicy fruit. Her own mouth watered as she now cast her eyes round the booth, and saw such beautiful bergamotte-pears, and such magnificent oranges, that would please Leonore so much!—the result, therefore, was that Petrea's reticule was filled with fruit instead of ribbon—in fact, there was now not money enough for such a purchase.

"But," said the easy-minded Petrea, "Louise has such a deal of old ribbon—she can very well lend me some." Petrea reasoned like all bad managers.

When Sarah and Petrea returned from their shopping expedition, Louise saw directly that the things which Sara had bought must far have exceeded her means; and beside this, Louise justly thought that they were unseemly for a young girl of her station. She looked without saying one word at the white silk; at the blue gauze for the tunic; the white and yellow asters for the hair, and at all the other ornaments which Sara, not without vanity, displayed.

"And what have you bought, Petrea?" asked she.

Petrea replied, with a blush, that she had bought nothing.

Not long afterwards Petra came to Louise, and asked her with a certain bashfulness, to lend her some old ribbon.

"Good Petrea," said Louise, displeased, "I want my ribbons myself, and you have had money just as well as I or any of the others, to buy what you may want."

Petrea was silent, but tears were in her eyes.

"I did not think, Louise," said Sara, hotly, "that you would have been so covetous as to refuse Petrea a bit of old ribbon, which you are certain not to want yourself."

"And I, Sara," returned Louise in the same tone, "could not have believed that you would

have so abused Petrea's good-nature and weakness as to have robbed her of her money just to indulge your own vanity!"

"Sara did not desire anything from me," said Petrea, with warmth; "I insisted upon it—I compelled her."

"And above all, Sara," continued Louise, with yet sterner earnestness, "I must tell you that the dress you have chosen appears to me neither modest nor becoming. I am quite persuaded that Schwartz has induced you to deviate from our first intention—and I must tell you, dear Sara, that were I in your place I would not allow such a person to have so great an influence with me; nor is this the only instance in which your behaviour to him has not appeared to me what it ought to be, or what I should wish in a sister of mine, and such as becomes the dignity of a woman. I am very sorry to say this."

"Oh, you are only too good!" returned Sara, throwing back her head, and with a scornful laugh; "but don't trouble yourself about me, Louise, for I can assure you it gives me very little concern what pleases you or what does not."

"So much the worse for you, Sara," said Louise, calmly, "that you concern yourself so little for those who are your true friends. I, besides, am not the only one whom your behaviour to Schwartz displeases: Eva ———"

"Yes, Sara," interrupted Eva, blushing, "I think too that you do not conduct yourself towards him as is becoming, for ———"

"Sisters," said Sara, with warmth and pride, "you cannot judge of what is seemly for me—you have no right to censure my conduct, and I will not endure ———"

"I think," said Petrea, warmly, "that if our mother has said nothing, nobody else has any right to say anything."

"Silence, dear Petrea," said Louise, "you are silly and blind to ———"

At this moment of confusion and disunion, when all the sisters were beginning to speak at once, and that in tones of indignation and reproof, a deep and mournful sigh was suddenly heard, which silenced all, and turned every eye to the door of the little boudoir. The mother stood there, with her hands clasped against her breast, pale, and with an expression of pain on her countenance, which sent a quick pang of conscience through the heart of every daughter. As all remained silent, she came forward, and said with a voice of emotion ———

"Why, ah, why, my dear girls, is all this? No explanations now! There is error and blame on one side, perhaps also on more; but why this bitterness, this incautious outbreak of injurious words? Ah, you know not what you are doing! You know not what a hell sisters can make for themselves, if they cherish such tempers. You know not how bitterness and harshness may grow among you to a dreadful habit; how you may become tormenting spirits to each other, and embitter each other's lives. And it could be so different! Sisters might be like good angels the one to the other, and make the paternal home like a heaven upon earth. Ah, think, think only that every day, nay, every hour, you are working for the future. Reflect that you may gladden and beautify your lives, or embitter them, according as you now act. Reflect, my dear girls, that it is in your power to make your parents, your family, yourselves, either very happy or very unhappy!"

The daughters were silent, and were penetrated

by the deep emotion which expressed itself in the words of her mother, by her pale countenance, and by her tears. They felt strongly the truth of all that she had said. Petrea burst into tears, and ran out of the room; Sara followed her silently; and Eva threw herself caressingly on her mother's neck.

"I have only spoken the truth to Sara," said Louise; "and it is not my fault if it be unpleasant for her to hear it."

"Ah! Louise," returned her mother, "this is constantly said in the world, and yet so much contention and hatred prevail between those who say it. Blind belief in our own faultlessness, and hard imputations excite the temper, and make the truth unproductive of good. Why should we present truth in a disfiguring dress, when she is in herself so pure and beautiful? I know, my dear girl, that you only wish to do that which is right and good, and whoever aims rightly at that object will not fail of the means also."

"Must I then dissimulate?" asked Louise. "Must I conceal my thoughts, and be silent, respecting that which I think wrong? That may indeed be prudent, but it certainly is not Christian."

"Become Christian in temper, my child," said the mother, "and you will easily discover the means of doing what is right in a proper and effectual manner. You will learn to speak the truth without wounding; a truly pure, truly affectionate spirit wounds no one, not even in trifles. For that reason, one need not to be silent when one should speak, but —"

"C'est le ton qui fait la chanson! Is it not so? he, he, he!" argued the shrill voice of Mrs. Gunilla, who had come in unobserved, and who thus put an end to the discourse. Soon afterwards the Assessor made his appearance, and they two fell into conversation, though not, as commonly, into strife with each other. Mrs. Gunilla lamented to him respecting Pyrrhus; she was quite in trouble respecting the little animal, which had now for some had a pain in the foot, that, spite of all means, got only worse and worse. She did not know what she was to do with the little favourite. The Assessor besought her, in the kindest manner, to allow him to undertake his treatment. He said he had always been much more successful in curing dogs than men, and that dogs were far more agreeable, and far nicer patients than their masters. Mrs. Gunilla was heartily glad, and the following morning she said Pyrrhus should be conveyed to him.

The family assembled themselves for tea, and the quick eyes of Mrs. Gunilla soon discovered that all was not quite as it should be.

"Listen, now," said she, "my little Elise: I know that there will be festivities, and balls, and banquets, given there at — what do they call it? and of course the young people here should all be at them and figure a little. If there be any little embarrassments about the toilet in which I can help, tell me candidly. Good heavens! one can imagine that easily. Young girls! — a rosette is wanted here, and a rosette is wanted there, and one thing and another — heart's-dearest! it is so natural. I know it all so well; — now tell me."

Elise thanked her cordially, but must decline this offer; her daughters, she said, must learn betimes to moderate their desires to their means.

"Yes, yes," said Mrs. Gunilla, "but I must tell you, my dear friend, there is no rule without its exception, and if any trifles are wanted, so — think on me."

Mrs. Gunilla was to-day in such a happy humour; she looked like somebody who was determined to make some fellow creature happy. The Assessor could not get into dispute with her. She rejoiced herself in the country, to which she should soon remove, in the spring which was at hand, and in the greenness which was approaching. The Assessor, on the contrary, rejoiced himself not at all. "What had one to rejoice about in such a hateful spring?" said he; "it was quite impossible to live in such a climate, and it must be the will of our Lord God that man should not live, or he would not have sent such springs. How could people plant potatoes in ice? and how otherwise could they be planted at all this year? And if people could get no potatoes, they must die of hunger, which was then perhaps the best part of the history of life."

On her side, Mrs. Gunilla bethought herself that she would willingly live. "Our Lord God," she said, "would take care that people had potatoes!" and then she looked with an expression of cordial sympathy on the troubled and distressed countenances of the young girls.

"When Eva, dear, is as old as me," said she, patting her gently on her white neck, "she will know nothing more of all that which so distresses her now."

"Ah! to be sixty years old!" exclaimed Eva, smiling, though with a tear in her eye.

"You'll get well on to sixty — well on; he, he, he!" said Mrs. Gunilla, consolingly. "Heart's dearest! it goes before one thinks of it. But only be merry and cheerful. Amuse yourselves at — what do you call it? and then come and tell me all about it. Do that nicely, and then I shall get my share of the fun though I am not there. That comes of the so-to-be envied sixty years, Eva, dear! he, he, he!"

The sun set bright and glorious. Mrs. Gunilla went to the window, and sent a little greeting towards the sun, whose beams, glancing through the trees of the opposite church-yard, seemed to salute her in return.

"It looks as if one should have a fine day to-morrow," said Mrs. Gunilla to herself gently, and looking very happy.

People place youth and age opposite to each other, as the light and shade in the day of life. But has not every day, every age, its own youth — its own new attractive life, if one only sets about rightly to enjoy them? Yes, the aged man, who has collected together pure recollections for his evening companions, is manifold happier than the youth who, with a restless heart, stands only at the beginning of his journey. No passions disturb the evening meal of the other — no restless endeavours disturb the cheerful gossip of the evening twilight; all the little comforts of life are then so thoroughly enjoyed; and we can then, with more confidence, cast all our cares and anxieties on God. We have then proved Him.

CHAPTER XXI.

DISENTANGLING.

"THERE are certainly too many bitter almonds in this, it does not taste good," said Elise, setting down a glass of almond-milk.

"Be pleased with us, dear mother," whispered Eva tenderly; "we are all friends again!"

The mother saw it in their beautiful beaming eyes; she read it in Louise's quick glance —

turned round from the table where she was helping Sara with her tunic, and looked at her mother. Elise nodded joyfully both to her and Eva, and drank to them the glass of almond-milk, which now appeared to have become suddenly sweet, so pleased did she look as she again set down the glass.

"Mamma, dear," said Gabriele, "we must certainly do something towards Petrea's toilette, otherwise she will not be presentable."

But Louise took Petrea's gauze-dress secretly in hand, and sat up over it till midnight, and adorned it so with her own ribbons and lace, that it was more presentable than it had ever been before.

Petrea kissed her skilful hands for all that they had done. Eva—yet we will, for the present, keep silent on her arrangements.

But dost thou know, O reader!—yes, certainly thou dost!—the zephyrs which call forth spring in the land of the soul—which call forth flowers, and make the air pure and delicious? Certainly thou knowest them—the little easy, quiet, unpretending, almost invisible, and yet powerful—in one word, human kindnesses.

Since these have taken up their abode in the Franks' family we see nothing that can prevent a general joyful party of pleasure. But yes!—it is true—

PETREA'S NOSE!

This was, as we have often remarked, large and somewhat clumsy. Petrea had great desire to unform it, particularly for the approaching festivities.

"What have you done to your nose? What is amiss with your nose?" were the questions which assailed Petrea on all sides, as she came down to breakfast on the morning of the eventful day.

Half laughing and half crying, Petrea related how she had made use of some innocent machinery during the night, by which she had hoped somewhat to alter the form of this offending feature, the consequence of which had unfortunately been the fixing a fiery red saddle across it, and a considerable swelling besides.

"Don't cry, my dear girl," said her mother, bathing it with oatmeal-water, "it will only inflame your nose the more."

"Ah," burst forth poor Petrea, "anybody is really unfortunate who has such a nose as mine! What in the world can they do with it? they must go into a convent."

"It is very much better," said her mother, "to do as one of my friends did, who had a very large nose, much larger than yours, Petrea."

"Ah, what did she do?" asked Petrea, eagerly.

"She made herself so beloved, that her nose was beloved too," said her mother. "Her friends declared that they saw nothing so gladly as her nose as it came in at the door, and that without it she would have been nothing."

Petrea laughed, and looked quite cheerful. "Ah," said she, "if my nose can but be beloved, I shall be quite reconciled to it."

"You must endeavour to grow above it!" said the good, prudent mother, jestingly, but significantly.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE DAY OF THE JOURNEY.

On the morning of the important day, all was in lively motion. The Assessor sent Eva a

large bouquet of most remarkably beautiful natural flowers, which she immediately divided among her sisters. The Judge himself, in a frenzy of activity, packed the things of his wife and daughters, and protested that nobody could do it better than he, and that nobody could make so many things go into one box as he could. The last was willingly conceded to him, but a little demur arose as to the excellence of the packing. The ladies asserted that he rumpled their dresses; the Judge asserted that there was no danger on that account, that everything would be found remarkably smooth, and stood zealous and warm in his shirt-sleeves beside the great travelling-case, grumbling a little at every fresh dress that was handed to him, and then exclaiming immediately afterward, "have you more yet, girls? I have more room. Do give me more! See now! that! and that! and that! and—now in the name of all weathers is there no end of your articles? Give them here, my girls! Let that alone, child! I shall soon lay it straight! What? rumple them, shall I? Well, they can be unrumpled again, that's all! are there no smoothing-irons in the world? What! so, so, my girls! Have you any more—I can yet put something more in."

They were to set off immediately after dinner, in order to be at Axelholm, which lay about two miles* from the city, ready for the ball in the evening. By dinner-time all boxes were packed, and all tempers cleared, more especially that of the Judge, who was so contented with his morning's work that he almost imparted his delight to those who at first were not altogether satisfied with it.

Petrea ate nothing but a pancake, with a little snow milk to it, in order that she might dance all the lighter.

"Above all things, my friends," prayed the Judge, "be precise, and be ready at half-past three—the carriages come then to the door; do not let me have to wait for you."

Precisely at half-past three the Judge went to the doors of his wife and daughters.

"Mother, girls! it is time to go," said he, "the clock has struck half-past three. The carriages are here."

"Directly, directly!" was answered from all sides. The Judge waited; he knew from experience what this "directly" meant.

In the fever of his punctuality his blood began to boil, and he walked up and down the hall with great steps, talking with himself, "It is shocking, though," argued he, "that they never are ready! but I won't be angry! Even if they make me angry, I will not spoil their pleasure. But patience is necessary, more than Job had!"

While he was thus moralising with himself, he heard the voice of his wife saying, with decision, in the library, "Come, now, dear girls! In heaven's name, don't keep the father waiting! I know, indeed, how it annoys him."

"But he said nothing the day before yesterday," Petrea's voice was heard to return, "though he had then to wait for us. I can't think what I have done with my gloves!"

"And precisely on that account he shall not wait a moment longer for us," said the mother; "and never again, if I can help it; so, if you are not ready, girls, I shall run away without you!"

The mother ran, and all the daughters ran merrily after her.

* A wedish mile is equal to six English miles

The father remarked with pleasure, that love has a far more effectual power than fear, and all were soon seated in the carriage.

We will allow them to roll away, and will now pay a little visit to

LEONORE'S CHAMBER.

Leonore sate solitary. She supported her sick head on her hand. She had impelled herself to answer kindly the leave-taking kiss of her mother and sisters; she had seen how they sought to repress their joy before her, and she had particularly remarked a sort of half-stifled roguish joy in the glance which was exchanged between Eva and her mother, which had pained her. She had heard their happy voices on the stairs, and then the driving away of the carriages. Now they were gone; now all was still and desolate in the house, and large tears traced their way down Leonore's cheeks. She seemed to herself so forlorn, so unloved for, so solitary in the world!

At that moment the door was softly opened, a smiling face looked in, and a light fascinating figure sprang forward through the chamber towards her, kissed her, laughed, and glanced with roguish and ardent affection into her astonished face.

"Eva!" exclaimed Leonore, scarcely trusting her eyes; "Eva, are you here? How! whither came you? Are you not gone with the others?"

"No, as you see," returned Eva, embracing her, laughing, and looking quite happy; "I am here, and mean to stay here."

"But why? What is the meaning of it?" asked Leonore.

"Because I would much rather remain here with you than go anywhere else," said Eva. "I have let Axelholm go with all its splendours."

"Ah! why have you done so? I would, much rather you had not," said Leonore.

"I knew that," returned her sister, "and therefore I put on a travelling dress, like the rest, and took leave of you with them. I wanted to take you by surprise, you see. You are not angry with me, are you? Look a little happy, dear Leonore!"

"I cannot, Eva," said Leonore, "because you have robbed yourself of a great pleasure on my account, and I know that it must have been difficult for you. I know that I am neither agreeable nor pleasing, and that you cannot love me, nor yet have pleasure with me, and on that account I cannot have pleasure in your sacrifice. It becomes you to be with the joyful and the happy. Ah! that you had but gone with them!"

"Do not talk so, unless you would make me weep," said Eva; "you do not know how the thought of giving up all these festivities in order to remain alone with you has given me pleasure for many days, and this precisely because I love you, Leonore! yes, because I feel that I could love you better than all the rest! Nay, do not shake your head, it is so; one cannot help one's feelings."

"But why should you love me?" argued the poor girl; "I am, indeed, so little amiable, nobody can endure me, nobody has pleasure in me; I would willingly die. Ah! I often think it would be so beautiful to die!"

"How can you talk so, Leonore!" said her sister; "it is not right. Would you wish such horrible grief to father and mother, and me, and all of us?"

"Ah!" said Leonore, "you and the sisters

would soon comfort yourselves. My mother does not love me as much as any of you others; my father also the same. Auntie R. said the other day that everybody talked of it—that I was beloved neither by father nor mother."

"Fie!" exclaimed Eva, "that was wicked and unjust of Auntie. I am quite certain that our parents love us all alike. Have you ever observed that they unjustly make any difference between us?"

"That I never have," said Leonore; "they are too good and perfect for that. But, do you think I have not observed with how different an expression my father regards me to that with which he looks on you or Louise? Do you think that I do not feel how cold, and at times constrained, is the kiss which my mother gives me, to the many which, out of the fulness of her heart, she gives to you or to Gabriele? But I do not complain of injustice. I see very well that it cannot be otherwise. Nature has made me so disagreeable, that it is not possible people can bear me. Ah! fortunate indeed are they who possess an agreeable exterior. They win the good-will of people if they only show themselves. It is so easy for them to be amiable, and to be beloved! But difficult, very difficult, is it for those who are ill-favoured as I!"

"But, dear Leonore, I assure you, you are unjust towards yourself. Your figure, for example, is very good; your eyes have something so expressive, something at the same time so soft and so earnest; your hair is fine, and is of a beautiful brown;—it would become you so if it were better dressed; but wait awhile, when you are better I will help you to do it, and then you shall see."

"And my mouth," said poor Leonore, "that goes from ear to ear, and my nose is so flat and so long—how can you mend that?"

"Your mouth?" replied Eva, "why yes, it is a little large; but your teeth are regular, and with a little more care would be quite white. And your nose?—let me see—yes, if there were a little elevation, a little ridge in it, it would be quite good, too! Let me see, I really believe it begins to elevate itself—yes, actually, I see plainly enough the beginning of a ridge! and do you know, if it come, and when you are well, and have naturally a fresh colour, I think that you will be really pretty!"

"Ah! if I can ever believe that!" said Leonore, sighing, at the same time that an involuntary smile lit up her countenance.

"And even if you are not so very lovely," continued Eva, "you know that yet you can be infinitely agreeable; you have something peculiarly so in your demeanour. I heard my father say so this very day."

"Did he really say so?" said Leonore, her countenance growing brighter and brighter.

"Yes, indeed he did!" replied her sister.

"But, ah! Leonore, after all, what is beauty? It fades away, and at last is laid in the black earth, and becomes dust; and even whilst it is blooming, it is not all-sufficient to make us either beloved or happy! It certainly has not an intrinsic value."

Never was the power of beauty depreciated by more beautiful lips! Leonore looked at her and sighed.

"No, Leonore," continued she, "do not trouble yourself to be beautiful. This, it is true, may at times be very pleasant, but it certainly is not necessary to make us either beloved or happy."

am convinced that if you were not in the least prettier than you are, yet that you might, if you would, in your own peculiar way, be as much in favour and as much beloved as the prettiest girls in the world."

"Ah!" said Leonore, "if I were only beloved by my nearest connexions! What a divine thing it must be to be beloved by one's own family!"

"But that you can be—that you will be, if you only will! Ah! if you only were always as you are sometimes—and you are more and more so—and I love you more and more—ininitely I love you!"

"O beloved Eva," said Leonore, deeply affected, while she leaned herself quietly on her sister, "I have very little deserved this from you; but, for the future, I will be different—I will be what you would like. I will endeavour to be good and amiable."

"And then you will be so lovely, so beloved, and so happy!" said Eva, "that it would be a real delight. But now you must come down into Louise's and my room. There is something there for you; you must change the air a little. Come, come!"

"Ah, how charming!" was Leonore's exclamation as she entered Eva's chamber; and, in fact, nothing could be imagined more charming than that little abode of peace, adorned as it now was by the coquetry of affection. The most delicious odour of fruit and flowers filled the air, and the sun threw his friendly beams on a table near the sofa, on which a basket filled with beautiful fruit stood enticingly in the midst of many pretty and tastefully arranged trifles.

"Here, dear Leonore," said Eva, "you will reside during this time. It will do you good to leave your room a little. And look, they have all left you an offering! This Gothic church of bronze is from Jacobi. It is a lamp! do you see? light comes through the window; how beautiful! We will light it this evening. And this fruit—do you see the beautiful grapes? All these are a plot between Henrik and Petrea. The copperplate engravings are from my father; Louise has worked you the slippers; and the little lady, she—"

Leonore clapped her hands. "Is it possible," said she, "that you all have thought so much about me! How good you are—ah, too good!"

"Nay, do not weep, Leonore," said Eva; "you should not weep, you should be joyful. But the best part of the entertainment remains yet behind. Do you see this new novel of Miss Edgeworth? Our mother has given you this, for us to read together aloud. I will read to you till midnight, if you will. A delicate little supper has been prepared for us by Louise, and we shall sup up here. We'll have a banquet in our own way. Take now one of those big grapes—high grow two on one stem, and I will take the other. The king's health! O glorious!"

While the two sisters are banqueting at their own innocent feast, we will see how it goes on in the great company at

AXELHOLM.

Things are not carried on in so enviably easy and unconstrained a manner at every ball as at that of the citizens in the good little city of —ping, where the baker's wife and the confectioner's wife were waiting together, but altogether in a wrong fashion, to which the rest only said, "it does not signify, if they only go on!"

So no! such innocence as that is seldom met

with, and least of all among those of whom we write.

At Axelholm, as at other great balls, the rock of convention made it impossible to move without a thousand ceremonies, proprieties, considerations, formalities, and all the rest, which, taken together, make up a vast sum of difficulties. The great ball at Axelholm was not without pretension, and on that account not without its stiff difficulties. Among these may be reckoned that several of the dance-loving gentlemen considered themselves too old, or too — to dance at all, and that, in consequence, many of the dance-loving ladies could not dance at all either, because, on account of the threatening eye-glasses of the gentlemen, they had not not courage to dance with one another. Nevertheless the scene looked like one of pure delight. The great saloon so splendidly lighted, and a vast assembly collected there!

It is now the moment just before the dancing begins; the gentlemen stand in a great group in the middle of the room, spreading themselves out in direct or wavy lines towards the circle of ladies. These sit, like flowers in the garden-beds, on the benches round the room, mostly in bashful stillness; while a few, in the consciousness of their zephyr-like lightness float about the room like butterflies. All look happy; all talk one with another, with all that animation, that reciprocal good-will, which the sight of so much beauty, united to the consciousness that they themselves are wearing their best looks, as well as the expectation of pleasure infuses.

Now the music begins to sound; now young hearts beat with more or less disquiet; now go the engaged ones, amid the jostlings of the servants, who are perpetually soliciting the young ladies to partake of the now-disdained tea. There one saw several young girls numerous surrounded, who were studying the promised dances which were inscribed on the ivory of their fans, declining fervent solicitations for the third, fourth, fifth—nay, even up to the twelfth dance; but promising themselves with fascinating grace for the thirteenth, which perhaps may never be danced; while others in their neighbourhood sit quiet and undisturbed waiting for the first invitation, in order thereto to say a willing and thankful yes. Among the many-surrounded and the much-solicited we may see Sara, and even Louise. With these emulated the three Misses Aftonstjerna—Isabella, Stella, and Aurora—who stood constantly round the chair of the Countess Solstrale, which was placed before the great mirror at the far end of the saloon. Among those who sat expectantly, in the most beautiful repose, we shall discover our Petrea, who, nevertheless, with her bandeau of pearls in her hair, and a certain bloom of innocence and goodness in her youthful countenance, looked uncommonly well. Her heart beat with an indescribable desire to be engaged.

"Ah!" sighed she, as she saw two most elegant young men, the two brothers B—, walking round the circle of ladies, with their eye-glasses in their hands. Their eye-glasses rested for a moment on Petrea; the one whispered something in the ear of the other; both smiled and went on. Petrea felt humiliated, she knew not why.

"Now!" thought she, as Lieutenant S. approached her quickly. But Lieutenant S. came to engage Miss T., and Petrea remained sitting. The music played the liveliest *anglaise*, and Petrea's feet were all in agitation to be moving.

"Ah! thought she, "if I were but a man I would engage Petrea."

"Where is Eva?" asked Jeremias Munter, in a hasty and displeased tone, from Louise, in the pause between the *anglaise* and the waltz.

"She has remained at home with Leonore," said Louise, "she was determined upon it."

"How stupid!" exclaimed he, "else why did I come here."

"Nay, that I really cannot tell!" returned Louise, laughing.

"Not!" retorted the Assessor. "Now, then, I will tell you, sister Louise, I came here entirely to see Eva dance—solely and altogether on that account, and for nothing else. What a stupid affair it was that she should stop at home! You had a great deal better, all the rest of you, have stopped at home together—*you* yourself, dear sister, reckoned into the bargain! Petrea there! what has she to do here? She was always a vexation to me, but now I cannot endure her since she has not understanding enough to stay at home in Eva's place—and this little curly-pate, which must dance with grown people just as if she were a regular person—could not she find a piece of sugar to keep her at home; instead of coming here to act the grown woman! You are all wearisome together, and such entertainments as these are the most horrible things I know."

Louise floated away in the waltz with Jacob, laughing over this sally; and the Countess Solstrale, the sun of the ball, said as she passed her chair, "Charmant, charmant!"

Besides this couple, who distinguished themselves by their easy harmonious motion, there was another, which whirled past in wild circles, and drew all eyes upon them likewise: this was Sara and the boisterous Mr. Schwartz. Her truly beaming beauty, her dress, her haughty bearing, her flashing eyes, called forth a universal ah! of astonishment and admiration. Petrea forgot that she was sitting while she looked upon her. She thought that she had never seen anything so transporting as Sara in the whirl of the dance. But the Countess Solstrale, as she sat in her chair, said of this couple—nothing; nay, people even imagined that they read an expression of displeasure in her countenance. The Misses Aftonstjerna sailed round in a very different manner.

"My dear girl," said Elise kindly, but seriously, to Sara, after the waltz, "you must not dance thus; your chest will not allow it. How warm you are—you really burn!"

"It is my climate," answered Sara; "it agrees with me excellently."

"I beseech you to sit this dance. It is positively injurious to you to heat yourself thus," said Elise.

"This dance?" returned Sara; "I am engaged for it to Colonel H."

"Then do not dance the next," besought Elise; "if you would do me a pleasure, do not dance it with Schwartz. He dances in such a wild manner as is prejudicial to the health; besides which, it is hardly becoming."

"It gives me pleasure to dance with him," answered Sara, both with pride and insolence as she withdrew; and the mother, wounded and displeased, returned to her seat.

The Countess Solstrale lavished compliments on Elise on account of her children. "They are positively the ornament of the room," said she;—"charmant! and your son a most prepossessing young man—so handsome and *comme il faut*! A charming ball!"

Isabella Aftonstjerna threw beaming glances on the handsome Henrik.

"What madness this dancing is!" said Mr. Munter, as with a strong expression of weariness and melancholy he seated himself beside Evelina. "Nay, look how they hop about and exert themselves, as if without this they could not get thin enough; then, good heavens! how difficult it seems, and how ugly it is! As if this could give them any pleasure! For some of them it seems as if it were day-labour; and as if it were a frenzy to others; and for a third, a kind of affectation; nay, I must go my ways, for I shall become mad or splenetic if I look any longer on this super-extra folly!"

"If Eva Frank were dancing too, you would not think it so," said Evelina, with a well-bred smile.

"Eva" repeated he, while a light seemed to diffuse itself over his countenance, and his eyes suddenly beamed with pleasure: "Eva! no! I believe so too. To see her dance is to see living harmony. Ah! it enlivens my mind if I only see her figure, her gait, her slightest movement; and then to know that all this harmony, all this beauty, is not mere paint—not mere outside; but that it is the true expression of the soul! I find myself actually better when I am near her; and I have often a real desire to thank her for the sentiments which she instils into me;—in fact she is my benefactress; and I can assure you, that it reconciles me to mankind and to myself, that I can feel thus to a fellow-creature. I cannot describe how agreeable it is, because commonly there is so much to vex oneself about in this so-called master-piece of the Creator!"

"But, best friend," said Evelina, "why are you so vexed? Most people have still—"

"Ah, don't go and make yourself an *ange de clemence* for mankind," said he, "in order to exalt yourself over me, otherwise I shall be vexed with you; and you belong to the class that I can best endure. Why do I vex myself? What a stupid question! Why are people stupid and wearisome, and yet make themselves important with their stupidity? And wherefore am I myself such a melancholy personage, worse than anybody else, and should have, withal, such a pair of quick eyes, as if only on purpose to see the infirmities and perversions of the world? There may, however, in many cases, be sufficient reason for all this. When one has had the fancy to come into the world against all order and Christian usage; has seen neither father nor mother beside one's cradle; heard nothing, seen nothing, learned nothing, which is in the least either beautiful or instructive; one has not entered upon life very merrily. And then, after all, to be called Munter! Good heavens! Munter! Had I been called Blannius (curser), or Skarnius (good-for-nothing), or Brummerius (grumbler), or Grublerius (freaker), or Rhabarberius, there might have been some sense in the joke; but Munter! I ask you now, is it not enough to make a man splenetic or melancholy all the days of his life? And then, to have been born into the world with a bad cold, and since then never to have been able to look up to heaven without sneezing—do you find that merry or lamentable? Well, and then! after I had worked my way successfully through the schools, the dust of books, and the hall of anatomy, and had come to hate them all thoroughly, and to love what was beau-

tiful in nature and in art, am I to thank my stars that I must win my daily bread by studying and caring for all that is miserable and revolting in the world, and hourly to go about among jaundice, and falling-sickness, and disease of the lungs? On this account I never can be anything but a melancholy creature! Yes, indeed, if there were not the lilies on the earth, the stars in heaven, and beyond all these some one Being who must be glorious—and were there not among mankind the human-rose Eva—the beautiful, fascinating Eva, thus—”

He paused; a tear stood in his eye, but the expression of his countenance soon was changed, when he perceived no less than five young girls—they danced now the “free choice”—and among them the three enchanting Misses Aftonstjerna, who, all locked together, came dancing towards him with a roguish expression. He cast towards them the very grimmest of his glances, rose up suddenly, and hastened away.

Sara danced the second waltz with Schwartz yet wilder than the first. Elise turned her eyes away from her with inward displeasure, but Petrea’s heart beat with secret desire for a dance as wild, and she followed their whirlings with sparkling eyes.

“Oh,” thought she, “if one could only fly through life in a joyful whirl like that!”

It was the sixth dance, and Petrea was sitting yet. “See now!” thought she, “farewell to all hopes of dancing! It must be that I am ugly, and nobody will look at me!” At the same moment she was aware of the eye of her mother fixed upon her with a certain expression of discomfort, and that glance was to her like a stab at the heart; but the next moment her heart raised itself in opposition to that depressing feeling which seemed about to overcome her. “It is unpleasant,” thought she, “but it cannot be altered, and it is no fault of mine! And as nobody will give me any pleasure, I will even find some for myself.”

Scarcely had Petrea made this determination, than she felt herself quite cheered; a spring of independence and freedom bubbled up within her: she felt as if she were able even to take down the chandelier from the ceiling, and all the more so when she saw so many life-enjoying people skipping around her.

At this moment an old gentleman rose up from a bench opposite Petrea, with a tea-cup in his hand. In a mania of officiousness she rushed forward in order to assist him in setting it aside. He drew himself back and held the cup firmly, whilst Petrea, with the most firm and unwearying “permit me, sir,” seemed determined to take it. The strife about the cup continued amid the unending bows of the gentleman, and the equally unending courtesies of Petrea, until a passing waltzing couple gave a jostle without the least ceremony whatever to the compliment-makers, which occasioned a shake of the tea-cup, and revealed to Petrea the last thing in the world which she had imagined, that the cup was not empty! Shocked and embarrassed, she let go her hold, and allowed the old gentleman, with what remained of his cup of tea, to go and find out for himself a securer place.

Petrea seated herself, she hardly knew how, on a bench near an elderly lady, who looked at her very good-naturedly, and who helped very kindly to wipe off the abluion of tea which she had received. Petrea felt herself quite confidential with this excellent person, and inquired from her

what was her opinion of Swedenborg, beginning also to give her own thoughts on spectral visions, ghosts, etc. The lady looked at her, as if she thought she might be a little deranged, and then hastened to change her place.

A stout military gentleman sat himself down ponderously, with a deep sigh, on the seat which the old lady had left, as if he were saying to himself, “Ah, thank God! here I can sit in peace!” But, no! he had not sate there three minutes and a half, when he found himself called upon by Petrea to avow his political faith, and invited by her to unite in the wish of speedy war with Russia. Lieutenant-Colonel Uh—turned rather a deaf ear to the battery by which his neighbour assailed him, but for all that he probably felt it not the less heavy, because after several little sham coughs he rose up, and left our Petrea alone with her warlike thoughts.

She also rose, from the necessity she felt of looking elsewhere for more sympathy and interest.

“In heaven’s name, dear Petrea, keep your seat!” whispered Louise, who encountered her on her search for adventures.

Petrea now cast her eyes on a young girl who seemed to have had no better dancing fortune than herself, but who seemed to bear it much worse, appeared weary of sitting, and could hardly refrain from tears. Petrea, in whose disposition it lay to impart to others what she herself possessed—sometimes overlooking the trifling fact that what she possessed was very little desired by others—and feeling herself now in possession of a considerable degree of prowess, wished to impart some of the same to her companion in misfortune, and seated herself by her for that purpose.

“I know not a soul here, and I find it so horribly wearisome,” was the unasked outpouring of soul which greeted Petrea, and which went directly to her sympathizing heart.

Petrea named every person she knew in the company to the young unfortunate, and then, in order to escape from the weight of the present, began to unfold great plans and undertakings for the future. She endeavoured to induce her new acquaintance to give her her *parole d’honneur* that she would some time conduct a social theatre with her, which would assist greatly to make social life more interesting; and farther than that, that they should establish together a society of Sisters of Charity in Sweden, and make a pilgrimage to Jerusalem; furthermore, that they would write novels together; and that on the following day, or more properly in the night, they would rise at half past ten o’clock, and climb to the top of a high mountain in order to see the sun rise; and finally, after all these, and sundry other propositions, Petrea suggested to her new acquaintance a thee-and-thou friendship between them! But, ah! neither Petrea’s great prowess, nor her great friendship; neither the social theatre, nor the pilgrimage to Jerusalem, least of all the thee-and-thou friendship, availed anything towards enlivening the churlish young girl. Petrea saw plainly that an invitation to dance would avail more than all her propositions, so, sighing deeply because she was not a man to offer so great a pleasure, she rose up, and left the object of her vain endeavours.

She looked round for a new subject, and her eye fell on the Countess Solstrale.* Petrea was

* Sunbeam.

dazzled, and became possessed of the frenzied desire to become acquainted with her—to be noticed by her; in short, in some kind of way to approach the sun of the ball, fancying thereby that a little glory would be reflected upon herself. But how was she to manage it? If the Countess would but let fall her handkerchief, or her fan, she might dart forward and pick it up, and then deliver it to her with a compliment in verse. Petrea, hereupon, began to improvise to herself—there was something, of course, about the sun in it. Undoubtedly this would delight the Countess, and give occasion to more acquaintance, and perhaps—but, ah! she dropped neither handkerchief nor fan, and no opportunity seemed likely to occur in which she could make use of her poem with effect. In the mean time she felt drawn as by a secret influence (like the planet to the sun) ever nearer and nearer to the queen of the saloon. The Aftonstjernas were now standing, beaming around her, bending their white and pearl-ornamented necks to listen to her jesting observations, and between whiles replying with smiles to the politeness and solicitations of elegant gentlemen. It looked magnificent and beautiful, and Petrea sighed from the ardent longing to ascend to the *haute volée*.

At this moment Jacobi, quite warm, came hastening towards her to engage her for the following quadrille.

Petrea joyfully thanked him; but suddenly reddening to the resemblance of a peony with her mania of participation, she added, "Might I accept your invitation for another person? Do me the great pleasure to ask that young girl that sits there in the window at our left."

"But why?" asked Jacobi, "why will not you?"

"I earnestly beseech you to do it!" said Petrea. "It would give me greater pleasure to see her dancing than if I danced myself."

Jacobi made some kind objections, but did in the end as she requested.

It was a great pleasure to Petrea to perceive the influence of this engagement on her young friend. But Fate and the Candidate seemed determined to make Petrea dance this quadrille; and a young officer presented himself before her in splendid uniform, with dark eyes, dark hair, large dark moustache, martial size, and very martial mien. Petrea had no occasion, and no disposition either, to return anything but a "yes" to this son of Mars. In fact, she never expected to receive a more honourable invitation; and a few minutes later she found herself standing close beside the chair of the Countess Solstrale, dancing in the same quadrille with the Aftonstjernas and *vis-à-vis* with the Candidate. Petrea felt herself highly exalted, and would have been perfectly prosperous had it not been for her restless demon, which incessantly spurred her with the desire of coming in closer contact with the beautiful, magnificent lady to whom she stood so near. To tread upon her foot or her dress, might, it is true, have furnished an easy occasion for many fine and reverential excuses; but, at the same time, this would be neither polite nor agreeable. To fall in some kind of way before her feet, and then, when graciously raised by the Countess, to thank her in a verse, in which the sun played a conspicuous part, would have been incontestably better; but now—Petrea must dance!

Was it that our Petrea really was so addled—if people will graciously allow us such an ex-

pression—that she had no right power over her limbs, or did it happen from want of ballast, in consequence of the slender dinner she had eaten, or was it the result of her distraction—we know not; but this much is certain, that she in *chassée*—ing on the right hand, on which she had to pass her *vis-à-vis*, made an error, and came directly up to him. He withdrew to the other side, but Petrea was already there; and as the Candidate again withdrew to the right, there was she again; and amid all this *chassée*—ing her feet got so entangled with his, that as he made a despairing attempt to pass her, it so happened that both fell down in the middle of the quadrille!

When Petrea, with tears in her eyes, again stood upright, she saw before her the eye-glass gentleman, the two brothers B., who were nearly dying with laughter. A hasty glance convinced Petrea that her mother saw nothing of it; and a second glance, that she had been observed by the Countess Solstrale, who was smiling behind her fan. The first observation consoled her for the last; and she fervently assured Jacobi, who was heartily distressed on her account, that she had not hurt herself; that it signified nothing; that it was her fault, etc., etc.; cast a tranquil glance on the yet laughing gentlemen, and chasséd boldly back again. But what, however, made the deepest impression on Petrea, was the conduct of her partner, and his suddenly altered behaviour. He brought the continued and unbecoming merriment of the Brothers B. to an end by one determined glance; and he who hitherto had been parsimonious of words, and who had only answered all her attempts at being entertaining by a yes, or a no, now became quite conversable, polite, and agreeable, and endeavoured in every possible way to divert her attention from the unpleasant accident which had just occurred, engaging her moreover for the *anglaise* after supper.

Petrea understood his kindness; tears came into her eyes, and her heart beat for joy at the thought of hastening to her mother after the quadrille and saying, "Mother, I am engaged for the quadrille after supper."

But no thought, no feeling could remain in tranquillity with the poor little "Chaos;" so many others came rushing in, that the first were quite effaced. Her first impression of the kindness of Lieutenant Y. was, "how good he is!" the second was, "perhaps he may endure me!" And hereupon a flood of imagined courtesy and courtship poured in, which almost turned her head. But she would not marry, heaven forbid! yet still it would be a divine thing to have a lover, and to be oneself "an object" of passion like Sara and Louise. Perhaps the young Lieutenant Y. might be related to the Countess Solstrale, and O heavens! how well it would sound when it was said "a nephew of the Countess Solstrale is a passionate admirer of Petrea Frank!" What a coming forth that would be! A less thing than that might make one dizzy. Petrea was highly excited by these imaginings, and was suddenly changed by them into an actual coquette, who set herself at work by all possible means to enslave "her object," in which a little, and for the moment very white, hand (for even hands have their moments), figuring about the head, played a conspicuous part. Petrea's amazing animation and talkativeness directed the eye-glass of her mother—for her mother was somewhat short-sighted—often in this direction, and called forth glances besides from Louise, which positively would have operated with a very ex-

ding effect, had not Petrea been too much excited to remark them. The observations and smiles of her neighbours Petrea mistook for tokens of applause; but she deceived herself, for they only amused themselves with the little coquetting, but not very dangerous lady. Lieutenant Y., nevertheless, seemed to find pleasure in her liveliness, for when the quadrille was ended he continued a dispute which commenced during it, and for this purpose conducted her into one of the little side rooms, which strengthened her in the idea of having made a conquest. Isabella Afonstjerna was singing there a little French song, the refrain of which was—

"Hommage à la plus belle,
Honneur au plus vaillant!"

The world was all brightness to Petrea: the song carried her back to the beautiful days of knighthood: Lieutenant Y. appeared to her as the ideal of knightly honour, and the glass opposite shewed her own face in such an advantageous light, that she, meeting herself there all beaming with joy, fancied herself almost handsome. A beautiful rose-tree was blossoming in the window, and Petrea, breaking off a flower, presented it to the Lieutenant, with the words

"Honneur au plus vaillant."

Petrea thought that this was remarkably striking and apropos, and secretly expected that her knight would lay the myrtle-spray, with which he was playing, at her feet, adding very appropriately—

"Hommage à la plus belle."

"Most humble thanks!" said Lieutenant Y. taking the rose with misfortune-promising indifference. But fate delivered Petrea from the unpleasantness of waiting in vain for a politeness which she desired, for suddenly there arose a disturbance in the ball-room, and voices were heard which said "She is fainting! Gracious heaven! Sara!"

Myrtle-spray, knight, conquest, all vanished now from Petrea's mind, and with a cry of horror she rushed from Lieutenant Y. into the ball-room at the very moment when Sara was carried out fainting. The violent dancing had produced dizziness; but taken into a cool room, and sprinkled with eau de Cologne and water, she soon recovered, and complained only of horrible headache. This was a common ailment of Sara's, but was quickly removed when a certain remedy was at hand.

"My drops!" prayed Sara in a faint voice.

"Where? where?" asked Petrea, with a feeling as if she would run to China.

"In the little box in our chamber," said Sara.

Quick as thought sped the kind Petrea across the court to the east wing. She sought through the chamber where their things were, but the box was not to be found. It must have been left in the carriage—but where was the carriage? It was locked up in the coach-house—and where was the key of the coach-house?

Great was Petrea's fatigue before she obtained this—before she reached the coach-house; and then before, with a lantern in her hand, she had found the missing box. Great also, on the other hand, was her joy, as breathless, but triumphant, she hastened up to Sara with the little bottle of medicine in her hand, and for reward she received the not less agreeable commission of dropping out sixty drops for Sara. Scarcely, however, was the medicine swallowed, when Sara exclaimed with violence:

"You have killed me, Petrea! You have given me poison! It is unquestionably Louise's elixir!"

It was so! The wrong bottle had been brought, and great was the perplexity.

"You do everything so left-handedly, Petrea!" exclaimed Sara, in ill-humour; "you are like the ass in the fable, that would break the head of his friend in driving away a fly."

These were hard words for poor Petrea, who would have been most willing to run off again in order to redeem her error, nor could she resist tears—she wept bitterly. Louise, excited against Sara by her severity to Petrea, and some little also by her calling her Elixir poison, threw upon her a look of great displeasure, and devoted herself to the weeping Petrea.

Whether it was the spirit of anger that dispersed Sara's headache, or actually Louise's elixir—Louise was firmly persuaded that it was the latter—we know not; but certain it was that Sara very soon recovered and returned to the company, without saying one consoling word to Petrea.

It was quite impossible, on account of her red, swollen eyes, for Petrea to appear at the supper-table, and Louise kindly remained with her. Aunt Evelina, Laura, Karie, and even the lady of the War-Councillor herself, brought them delicacies. Amid so much kindness, Petrea could not do otherwise than become again tranquil and lively. She should, she thought, after all, dance the *anglaise* after supper with "le plus vaillant," as she called the Lieutenant, who had truly captivated her heart.

The *anglaise* had already begun as the sisters entered the ball-room. The Candidate hastened to meet them quite in an uneasy state of mind—he had engaged Louise for this dance, and they now stood up together in the crowd of dancers. Petrea expected, likewise, that "le plus vaillant" would rush up to her and seize her hand; but, as she cast a hasty glance around, she perceived him, not rushing towards her, but dancing with Sara, who was looking more beautiful and brilliant than ever. The rose which Petrea had given him—faithless knight!—together with the myrtle sprig on which she had speculated, were both of them placed in Sara's bosom. The eyes of "le plus vaillant" were incessantly riveted upon "la plus belle," as Sara was then unanimously declared to be. The glory of the Afonstjernas paled in the night, as they were too much heated by dancing, but Sara's star burned brighter and brighter. She was introduced to the Countess Solstrale, who paid her charming compliments, and called her "la reine du bal," at which the Afonstjernas looked displeased.

"Thousand devils, how handsome she is!" exclaimed the old gentleman who had striven with Petrea about the teacup, and who now, without being aware of it, trod upon her foot as he thrust himself before her to get a better view of "la reine du bal."

Overlooked, humiliated, quiet and dejected, Petrea withdrew into another room. The scenes of the evening passed in review before her soul, and appeared now quite in an altered light. The mirror which a few hours before had flattered her with the notion that she might be called *la plus belle*, now showed her her face red and unsightly; she thought herself the most ridiculous and unfortunate of human beings. She felt at this moment a kind of hostility against herself. She thought on something which she was preparing

for Sara, and which was to be an agreeable surprise to her, and which was to be made known to her in a few days—she thought of this, and in that moment of trouble the thought of it, like a sunbeam on dark clouds, brightened the night in her soul. The thought of gratifying one, who on this evening had so deeply wounded her, gave a mild and beneficial turn to her mind.

After supper, a balcony in the saloon adjoining the ball-room was opened, in order somewhat to cool the heated atmosphere of the room.

Two persons, a lady and gentleman, stepped into the balcony; a light white shawl was thrown over the lady's shoulders; stars garianded her dark hair; stars flashed in her black eyes, which glanced fiercely around into free space.

There lay over the landscape the deliciously mysterious half-darkness of a May-night—a magical veil, which half hides and half reveals its beauty, and which calls forth mysterious and prophetic forebodings. A mighty and entrancing revelation of the gloriousness of life seemed to sing in the wind, which passed tranquilly whistling through space, shone in the stars, and wandered high above earth.

"Ah, life! life!" exclaimed she, and stretched forth her arms towards space, as if she would embrace it.

"Enchanting girl!" said he, while he seized her hand, "my life belongs to you!"

"Conduct me forth into free, fresh life," said she, without withdrawing her hand, and looking laughingly at him all the while, "and my hand belongs to you! But remember you this, that I will be free—free as the wind which now kisses your forehead, and lifts those topmost branches of the tree. I love freedom, power, and honour! Conduct me to these, help me to obtain these, and my gratitude will secure to you my love; will fetter me to you with stronger bonds than those of ceremony and prejudice, to which I only submit out of regard to those who otherwise would weep over me, and whom I would not willingly distress more than there is need for. It shall not bind us more than we ourselves wish. Freedom shall be the releasing of our bond!"

"Beautiful woman!" answered he, "raised above the hypocrisy of weakness; above the darkness of prejudice—I admire you and obey you! Only to such a woman can my will submit! My beautiful scholar is become my teacher! Well then, let the band of the priest unite us; my hand shall conduct you up to that brilliant throne which your beauty and your talents deserve! I will only elevate you in order, as now, to fall before your feet the most devoted of your servants!"

He drooped upon one knee before her; and she, bending herself towards him, let her lips touch his forehead. He threw his arms round her, and held her for one moment bent towards him. A supercilious scornful expression, unobserved by her, played upon his lips.

"Release me, Hermann! some one comes," said she; he did so, and as she raised her proud neck against his will, a flash of indignation burned in her eyes.

They withdrew, and another couple stepped out into the balcony.

He. Wait, let me wrap your cloak better round you; the wind is cool.

She. Ah, how beautiful to feel how it wraps us both! Do you see how we are here standing between heaven and earth, separated from all the world?

He. I do not see it—I see my lovely world in my arms! I have you, Laura! Laura, tell me, are you happy?

She. Ah, no!

He. How?

She. Ah, I am not happy because I am too happy! I fancy I never can have deserved this happiness. I cannot conceive how it came to my share. Ah, Arvid! to live thus with you, with my mother, my sister, all that I most love—and then to be yours for so long!

He. Say for ever, my Laura! Our union belongs as much to heaven as to earth, here as there; to all eternity I am yours, and you are mine!

She. Hush, my Arvid! I hear my mother's voice—she calls me—let us go to her.

They hastened into the room, and presently another couple took their place.

He. Cousin Louise, do you like evening air? Cousin Louise, I fancy it is rather romantic. Cousin, do you like the stars? I am a great friend of the stars too; I think on what the poet sings:

—silently as Egypt's priests
They move.

Look, cousin Louise, towards the corner—in the west there lies Oestanvik. If it would give you any pleasure to make a little tour there, I would beg that I might drive you there in my new landau. I really think, Cousin Louise, that Oestanvik would please you: the peaches and the vines are just now in full bloom; it is a beautiful sight.

A deep sigh is heard.

She. Who sighs so?

A Voice. Somebody who is poor, and who now, for the first time, envies the rich.

He. O rich! God forbid! rich I am not exactly. One has one's competency, thank God! One has wherewith to live. I can honestly maintain myself and a family. I sow two hundred bushels of wheat; and what do you think, Cousin Louise—but where is Cousin Louise?

A Voice. It seemed to her, no doubt, as if a cold wind came over here from Oestanvik.

At the moment when the two gentlemen returned to the room, a girl came alone into the balcony. The misfortunes of the evening depressed her heart, and were felt to be so much more humiliating because they were of such a mean kind. Some burning tears stole quickly down her cheeks, but were kissed away by the evening wind. She looked up to heaven; it never had seemed so high and glorious before. Her soul raised itself—mounted even higher than her glance—up to the mighty friend of human hearts; and He gave to hers a presentiment, that a time would come when, in his love, all adversity of earth would be forgotten.

The days at Axelholm wore on merrily amid ever-varying delights. Petrea wrote long letters, in prose, and in verse, to her sisters at home, and imparted to them all that occurred here. Her own misfortunes, which she even exaggerated, she described in such a comic manner, that those very things which were at first distressing to her, were made a spring of hearty merriment both to herself and to her family.

She received one day a letter from her father, which contained the following words:

"MY GOOD CHILD,

"Your letters, my dear child, give me and your sisters great pleasure; not merely on account of the lively things which they contain, but more

could not succeed—it was all past; everybody, but more especially Jacobi, were out of tune for mirth, and they now began to speak of returning home.

But now all at once the heavy tramping of horses, and a bustle at the inn door was heard, and at the same moment a splendid landau, drawn by four prancing horses, drew up before it. It was the Landed-proprietor, who, unacquainted with the hasty departure of the Franks from Axelholm, was now returning there after a short absence, and who had drawn up at this inn for a moment's breathing-time for his horses, and to order for himself a glass of the beer for which the place was renowned. The company which he here so unexpectedly encountered occasioned an alteration in his first plan. He determined to accompany the family to the city, and besought his aunt and cousins to make use of his landau. It would certainly please them so much; it went with such unexampled ease; was so comfortable that one could sleep therein with perfect convenience even on the heaviest roads, etc. etc. Elise, who really had suffered from the merciless shaking of the hired carriage, was inclined to accept the offer; and as it immediately began to rain, and as the Judge preferred the carriage to the chaise in which he had driven with Eva, the affair was quickly arranged. Elise and some of the daughters were to go in the landau, which was turned in the mean time, on account of the rain, into a coach; and the Judge, and the rest of the company were to divide themselves among the other carriages. As these were ready to receive the company, Jacobi drove his Medewi-carriage close on the landau of the Landed-proprietor, who looked more than once with a dark countenance to see whether any profane or injurious contact had taken place.

Jacobi's heart beat violently as Louise came out on the steps of the inn door. The Landed-proprietor stood on one side offering his hand, and Jacobi on the other offering his also, to conduct her to her former seat. She appeared faint, and moved slowly; she hesitated for one moment, and then gave, with downcast eyes, her hand to the Landed-proprietor, who assisted her triumphantly into the carriage to her mother, and then mounting the box himself, away dashed the landau with its four prancing horses. Jacobi laid his hand on his heart, a choking sensation seemed to deprive him of breath, and with tears in his eyes he watched the handsome departing carriage. The voice of Petrea, announcing to him that the enviable happiness awaited him of driving herself and Mr. Munter in the Medewi-carriage, called him to himself. He took his former seat in silence; his heart was full of disquiet; and he remained far behind the others, in order that he might not have the least glimpse of the landau.

Scarcely had the Medewi-carriage again made acquaintance with the ruts of the road than a violent shock brought off one of the fore wheels, and the Candidate, Petrea, and the Assessor, were tumbled one over the other into the mud. Quickly, however, they were all three once again on their feet; Petrea laughing, and the Assessor scolding and fuming. When Jacobi had discovered that all which was alive was unhurt, he looked lightly on the affair, and began

to think how best it might be remedied. A short council was held in the rain, and it was concluded that Jacobi should remain with the carriage till some one came to his assistance, and that in the mean time Petrea and the Assessor should make the best of their way on foot towards the city, and send, as soon as possible, some people to his help. A labourer, who came by immediately afterwards, promised to do the same, and Petrea and Munter, who, however, was anything but consistent with his name, began their walk through rain and mud. All this while, however, Petrea became more joyful and happy: firstly, all this was an adventure to her; secondly, she never before had been out in such weather; thirdly, she felt herself so light and unencumbered as she scarcely ever had done before; and, because she looked upon her clothes as given up to fate—to a power against which none other on earth could contend, she walked on in joy of heart, splashing through the puddles, and feeling with great delight how the rain was penetrating her dress, and seeing how the colour was washed away both from shawl and bonnet.

Petrea had in all this a resemblance to her brother, and flattered herself also that she might have some resemblance to Diogenes; and as her inclination lay towards extremes, she would very willingly be Diogenes, since she could not, as she very well knew, be Alexander. Now she perceived that in reality she needed very little of outward comforts to make her happy; she felt herself in her adverse circumstances so free and rich; she had become on these-and-those terms with the rain-drops, with the wind, with the shrubs and grass—with all nature in short; she had not here the mishaps and the humiliations to fear which annoyed her so often in company. If the magpies laughed at her, she laughed at them in return. Long life to freedom!

With all these feelings, Petrea got into such excessively high spirits, that she infected herself with her companions in misfortune; or according to her vocabulary, good fortune. But now, however, came in such a horrible tempest, with hail, that Petrea was obliged to quail before it. The Assessor looked out for shelter; and Petrea, quite charmed that she was nearly blown away, followed him along a narrow foot-path which led into the wood, onward in the direction of a smoke, which, driven towards them by the storm, seemed to announce that a hospitable hut was at hand where they might obtain shelter. While they were wandering about to discover this, Petrea's fancy, more unrestrained than the storm, busied itself with creations of robbers, castles, white hermits, hidden treasures, and other splendours, to which the smoke was to conduct her. But ah! they were altogether built up of smoke, since it arose from no other than a charcoal-burner's kiln, and Petrea had not the smallest desire to make a nearer acquaintance with the hidden divinity of which the smoke was the evidence. The smallest hut of the charcoal-burner, in the form of a sugar-loaf, stood not far from the kiln, the unbolted door of which was opened by the Assessor. No hermit, nor even robber had his abode therein; but the hut was clean and compact, and it was with no little pleasure that the Assessor took possession of it, and seated him-

self with Petrea, on the only bench which it possessed. Petrea sighed. What a miserable metamorphosis of her glorious castle in the air!

The prospect which the open door of the hut presented, and which had no interest for Petrea, appeared, on the contrary, captivating to her companion. He was there deep in the wood, in a solitude wild, but still of an elevating character. The hut stood in an open space, but round about it various species of pine trees stood boldly grouped, and bowed themselves not before the storm which howled in their tops. Several lay fallen on the ground, but evidently from age; grass and flowers grew on the earth, which these patriarchs of the wood had torn up with their powerful roots. Among others, two tall pine trees stood together: the one was decayed, and seemed about to separate itself from its root; but the other, young, green, and strong, had so entwined it in its branches, that it stood upright, mingling its withered arms with the verdure of the other, and yielding not, although shook by the tempest. The expressive glance of the Assessor rested long on these trees; his eyes filled with tears; his peculiar, beautiful, but melancholy smile played about his lips, and kindly sentiments seemed to fill his breast. He spoke to Petrea of a people of antiquity who dwelt in deserts; he spoke of the pure condition of the Essenes, a morning dawn of Christendom, and his words ran thus:

"A thirst after holiness drove men and women out of the tumult of the world, out of great cities, into desert places, in order that they might dedicate themselves to a pure and perfect life. There they built for themselves huts, and formed a state, whose law was labour and devotion to God. No earthly possession was enjoyed merely on account of pleasure, but only as the means of a higher life. They strove after purity in soul and body; tranquillity and seriousness characterised their demeanour. They assembled together at sunrise, and lifted up hymns and prayers to the Supreme Being. Seventeen hours of each day were devoted to labour, study, and contemplation. Their wants were few, and therefore life was easy. Their discourse was elevated, and was occupied by subjects of the sublime learning which belonged to their sect. They believed on one Eternal God, whose existence was light and purity. They sought to approach him by purity of heart and action, by renunciation of the pleasures of the world, and by humility of heart and mind to understand the works of the allwise Creator. They believed in quiet abodes on the other side of the desert pilgrimage, where clear waters ran and soft winds blew, where spring and peace had their home; there they hoped to arrive at the end of their journey through life."

There is no want of rays of light on earth; they penetrate its misty atmosphere in manifold directions, although human perception is not as much aware of them at one time as at another. The words of the Assessor made at this moment an indescribable impression on Petrea. She wept from the sweet emotion excited by the description of a condition which was so perfect, and of endeavours which were so holy. It appeared to her as if she knew her own vocation—her own path through life; one which would release her soul from all trifles, all vanities, all

disquiets, and which would speed her on to light and peace. While these thoughts, or rather sentiments, swelled in her breast, she looked through her tears, not on her companion, as he sat there with his expressive countenance and his large beautiful eyes fixed on the scene before him—she saw in him, not Jeremias Munter, but a white hermit, with a soul full of sublime and holy knowledge. She longed to throw herself at his feet, and beseech his blessing; to propose to him that he should remain in this solitude, in this hut, with her; that he should teach her wisdom; and she would wait upon him as a daughter or as a servant, would rise with him and pray at sunrise, and do in all things like the Essenes. Thus would they die to the world, and live only for heaven.

Overpowered by her excited feelings, surrendered to the transports of the moment, and nearly choked with tears, Petrea sank on the breast of Jeremias, stammering for her undefined wishes.

If a millstone had fallen round his neck, our good Assessor could not have been more confounded than he was at that moment. Deeply sunk in his own thoughts, he had quite forgotten that Petrea was there, till reminded of her presence in this unexpected manner. But he was a man, nevertheless, who could easily understand the excitement of mind in a young girl, and with a pure fervour of eye, while a good-humoured satire played about his mouth, he endeavoured to tranquillise her overwrought feelings. Beautiful, then, was the discourse he held with her on all that calms and sanctifies life; on all that on which man may found his abode, whether in the desert or in the human crowd; he spoke words then which Petrea never forgot, and which often, in a future day, broke the chaotic state of her soul like beams of pure light.

In the mean time the tempest had dispersed itself, and the Assessor began to think of a return; for Petrea thought nothing about it, but would willingly have seen herself compelled to pass the night in the gloomy wood. But now the thought of relating her adventures at home attracted her, and before she got out of the wood, these adventures were increased, since fate presented her with the good fortune of assisting, with the help of her companion, an old woman, who had fallen with her bundle of sticks, upon her legs again, and of carrying the said bundle to her cottage, and of lighting her fire for her; with releasing two sparrows which a boy had made captive; and, last of all, with releasing the Assessor himself from a thorn-bush, which, as it appeared, would have held him with such force as vexed even himself. Petrea's hands bled in consequence of this operation, but that only made her the livelier.

When they came out of the wood, the rain had ceased altogether, the wind had abated, and the setting sun illumined the heavens and diffused over the landscape a peculiar and beautiful radiance. The countenance of Jeremias Munter was cheerful; he listened to the ascending song of the lark, and said, "this is beautiful!" He looked upon the rain-drops which hung on the young grass, and saw how heaven reflected itself in them, and said, "that is pure!" Petrea gave to little children that

she met with all her savings from the feast of Axelholm, and would willingly also have given them some of her clothes, had she not had the fear of Louise and her mother before her eyes. She wished for more adventures, and more particularly for a longer way than it at this time appeared to be; she thought she arrived at home too soon, but the Assessor thought not, neither did the rest of the party, who were beginning to be very uneasy on account of their long absence. In the mean time Petrea and her companion had become very good friends on the walk; Petrea was complimented for her courage, and Henrik pathetically declaimed in her praise—

"Not every one such height as Xenophon can gain,
As scholar and as hero, a laurel-wreath obtain;"
and they all laughed.

CHAPTER XXIV.

FIREPLACE SCENES.

"From home may be good, but at home is best!" said Elise, from the bottom of her heart, as she was once more in her own house, and beside her own husband.

The young people said nothing in opposition to this sentiment as they returned to their comfortable every-day life, which they now enlivened with recollections and relations out of the lately-past time. They hoped that Louise would become pleasant and contented with her calm activity in the house and family as formerly, but it was not so; a gnawing pain seemed to consume her; she became perceptibly thinner; her good humour had vanished, and her eyes were often red, with weeping. In vain her parents and sisters endeavoured, with the tenderest anxiety, to fathom the occasion of the change; she would confess it to no one. That the root of her grief lay at her heart she would not deny, but she appeared determined to conceal it from the eye of day. Jacobi also began to look pale and thin, since he lamented deeply her state of feeling, and her altered behaviour, especially towards himself, which led him to the belief that he unconsciously had wounded her, or in some other way that he was the cause of her displeasure; and never had he felt more than now what a high value he set upon her, nor how much he loved her. This tension of mind, and his anxiety to approach Louise, and bring back a friendly understanding between them, occasioned various little scenes, some of which we will here describe.

FIRST SCENE.

Louise sits by the window at her embroidery-frame: Jacobi seats himself opposite to her.

JACOBI (sighing). Ah, Mamselle Louise!

Louise looks at her shepherdess, and works on in silence.

JACOBI. Everything in the world has appeared to me for some time wearisome and oppressive.

Louise works on, and is silent.

JACOBI. And you could so easily make all so different. Ah! Louise! only one kind word, one friendly glance! Cannot you bestow one friendly glance on him who would gladly give

everything to see you happy? [*Aside. She blushes—she seems moved—she is going to speak! Ah, what will she say to me!*]

LOUISE. One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten stitches to the nose—the pattern is here not very distinct.

JACOBI. You will not hear me, will not understand me; you play with my distress! Ah! Louise!

LOUISE. I want some more wool;—I have left it in my room. [*She goes.*]

SECOND SCENE.

The family is assembled in the library: tea is just finished. Louise, at Petrea's and Gabrielle's urgent request, has laid out the cards on a little table to tell them their fortunes. The Candidate seats himself near them, and appears determined to amuse himself with them, and to be lively; but Louise assumes all the more her "cathedral air." The Landed-proprietor steps in, bows, snorts, and kisses the hand of the "gracious aunt."

LANDED-PROPRIETOR. Very cold this evening; I fancy we shall have frost.

ELISE. It is a gloomy spring. We have lately read a most affecting account of the famine in the northern provinces. It is the misfortune of these late springs.

LANDED-PROPRIETOR. O yes, the famine up there. No, we'll talk of something else—that's too gloomy. I've had my peas covered with straw. Cousin Louise, are you fond of playing Patience? I am very fond of it too; it is so composing. At my seat at Oestanvik I have little, little patience-cards. I fancy really that they would please my cousin.

The Landed-proprietor seats himself on the other side of Louise: the Candidate gives some extraordinary shrugs.

LOUISE. This is not patience; but a little witchcraft, by which I read fate. Shall I prophesy to you, Cousin Thure?

LANDED-PROPRIETOR. O yes! prophesy something to me. Nothing disagreeable! If I hear anything disagreeable in an evening, I always have bad dreams at night. Prophesy me prettily—a little wife—a wife as lovely and as amiable as Cousin Louise.

THE CANDIDATE [with a look as if he would send the Landed-proprietor head-over-heels to Oestanvik]. I don't know whether Mamselle Louise likes flattery.

LANDED-PROPRIETOR (who seems as if he neither heard nor saw his rival). Cousin Louise, are you fond of blue?

LOUISE. Blue! That is truly a lovely colour; but yet I prefer green.

LANDED-PROPRIETOR. Nay, that is good! that is excellent! At Oestanvik, my dressing-room furniture is blue, beautiful light blue silk damask; but in my sleeping-room I have green moor-reen. I fancy really, Cousin Louise, that—

The Candidate coughs, and then rushes out of the room. Louise looks after him, sighs, and then examines the cards, in which she finds so many misfortunes for Cousin Thure, that he is quite terrified: the peas frosted, conflagration in the dressing-room, and last of all a rejection! The Landed-proprietor declares, notwithstanding, that he finds nothing of this unpleasant. The sisters smile, and make remarks.

THIRD SCENE.

The family assembled after supper :

JEREMIAS MUNTER. What is the bitterest affliction?

JACOBI. Unreturned love.

PETREA. Not to know what one shall be.

EVA. To have offended some one that one loves beyond reconciliation.

THE MOTHER. I am of Eva's opinion ; I think nothing can be more painful.

LOUISE. Ah! there is yet something more painful than that—something more bitter—and that is to lose one's faith in those whom one has loved ; to doubt—(Louise's lip trembles, she can say no more, becomes pale, rises, and goes out quickly ; a general sensation ensues).

THE FATHER. What is amiss with Louise? Elise, we must know what it is! She should, she must tell us! I cannot bear any longer to see her thus ; and I will go this moment and speak with her, if you will not rather do it. But you must not be satisfied till you know her very inmost feelings. The most horrid thing, I think, is mystery and vapours!

THE MOTHER. I will go directly to her. I have now an idea what it is, dearest Ernst ; and if I am somewhat long with her, let the others go to bed. I shall then find you alone. [She goes out.]

FOURTH SCENE.

The daughter on her knees, her face buried in her hands ; the mother goes softly up to her and throws her arms around her.

MOTHER. Louise, my good girl, what is amiss with you? I have never seen you thus before. You must tell me what is at your heart—you must!

LOUISE. I cannot! I dare not!

MOTHER. You can! you may! Will you make yourself, me, and all of us wretched by going on in this way! Ah, Louise, do not let false shame, or false tenderness mislead you. Tell me, do you break any oath, or violate any sacred duty by confessing what it is which depresses you?

LOUISE. No oath ; no sacred duty—and yet—yet—

MOTHER. Then speak, in heaven's name, my child! Unquestionably some unfounded suspicion is the cause of your present state. What do the words mean with which you left us this evening? You weep! Louise, I pray, I beseech of you, if you love me, conceal nothing from me! Who is it that you love, yet can no more have faith in—no longer highly esteem? Answer me—is it your mother!

LOUISE. My mother! my mother! Ah, if you look on me thus! I feel a pain, an emotion. Ah, my God! all may be an error—a miserable slander, and I— Well then, it shall out—that secret which has gnawed my heart, and which I conceived it my duty to conceal! But forgive me, my mother, if I grieve you ; forgive me if my words disturb your peace ; forgive me, if in my weakness, if in my doubt I have done you injustice, and remove the grief which has poisoned my life! Ah, do you see, mother, it was mine, it was my sisters' happiness, to consider you so spotless—so angelically pure! It was my pride that you were so, and that you were my mother! And now—

MOTHER. And now, Louise?

LOUISE. And now it has been whispered to me—oh, I cannot tell it!

MOTHER. Speak it out—I desire it! I demand it! We both stand before the Judgment-seat of God!

LOUISE. I have been led to believe that even my mother was not blameless—that she—

MOTHER. Go on, Louise!

LOUISE. That she and Jacobi loved one another—that evil tongues had not blamed them without cause, and that still—I despised these words, I despised the person who spoke them ; I endeavoured to chase these thoughts as criminal from my soul. On this account it happened that I went one day to find you—and I found Jacobi on his knee before you—I heard him speaking of his love. Now you know all, mother!

MOTHER. And what is your belief in all this?

LOUISE. Ah, I know not what I ought to believe! But since that moment there has been no peace in my soul, and I have fancied that it never would return, that I should never lose the doubt which I could make known to no one.

MOTHER. Let peace return to your soul, my child! Good God! how unfortunate I should be at this moment if my conscience were not pure! But, thank heaven, my child, your mother has no such fault to reproach herself with ; and Jacobi deserves your utmost esteem, your utmost regard. I will entirely and freely confess to you the entire truth of that which has made you so uneasy. For one moment, when Jacobi first came to us, a warmer sentiment towards me awoke in his young, thoughtless heart, and in part it was returned by me. But you will not condemn me on account of an involuntary feeling which your father looked on with pardoning eyes. In a blessed hour we opened to each other our hearts, and it was his love, his strength and gentleness, which gave me power to overcome my weakness. Jacobi, at the same moment woke to a consciousness of his error, struggled against it, and overcame it. We separated soon after, and it was our mutual wish not to meet again for several years. In the mean time, Henrik was committed to his care, and Jacobi has been our exemplary friend, and instructor to him. Three years later, when I again met him, I extended my hand to him as a sister ; and he—yes, my dear girl! and I err greatly if he did not then begin in his heart to love me as a mother. But what then had its beginning, has since then had its completion—it was in the character of a son that you saw him kneel to me, thanking me that I would favour his love to my daughter—to my Louise, who, therefore, has so unnecessarily conjured up a monster to terrify herself and us all."

In the latter part of this conversation the mother spoke quite in a jesting tone, which, perhaps, did more even than her simple explanation to reassure the heart of her daughter. She pressed her hands on her heart, and looked thankfully up to heaven.

"And if," continued her mother, "you yet entertain any doubt, talk with your father, talk with Jacobi, and their words will strengthen mine. But I see you need it not—your heart, my child, is again at peace!"

"Ah, thank God! thank God!" exclaimed Louise, sinking on her knees before her mother, and covering her hands and even her dress with kisses. "Oh, that I dared to look up again to

you! Oh, can you forgive my being so weak; my being so easy of belief! Never, never shall I forgive myself!"

Louise was out of herself, she trembled violently; she had never before been in a state of such agitation. Her mother, however, knew the remedy for the mind as well as for the body—knew how to tranquilize her excited state. She besought her, therefore, to go to rest, seated herself beside her bed, took her hand in hers, and then attempted to divert her mind from the past scene, endeavouring with the utmost delicacy to turn her mind on the Candidate and on the Landed-proprietor as lovers. But Louise had only one thought, one sentiment—the happy release from her doubt. When her mother saw that she was calmer, she embraced her. "And now go to sleep, my dear girl," said she. "I must now leave you in order to hasten to one who waits impatiently for me, and that is your father. He is extremely uneasy on your account, and I can now make him easy by candidly communicating all that has passed between us. For the rest I can assure you that you have said nothing which can make us uneasy. That I was calumniated by one person, and am so still, he knows as well as I do. He has assisted me to bear it calmly; he is truly so superior, so excellent! Ah, Louise, it is a great blessing when husband and wife, parents and children, cherish entire confidence in each other! It is so beautiful, so glorious, to be able to say every thing to each other in love!"

FIFTH SCENE.

The garden. It is morning! the larks sing, the narcissi fill the air with odour; the bird cherry-tree waves in the morning breeze; the cherry blossoms open themselves to the bees which hum about in their bosom. The sun shines on all its children.

Louise is walking in the middle-alley, Father Noah's sermon in her hand, but with her eyes fixed on the little poem appended to it, which by no means had anything to do with Father Noah. The Candidate comes towards her from a cross walk, with a gloomy air, and a black pansy in his hand.

The two meet, and salute each other silently.

JACOBI. Might I speak one moment with you? I will not detain you long.

Louise bows her head, is silent, and blushes.

JACOBI. In an hour's time I shall take my departure, but I must beseech of you to answer me one question before I say farewell to you!

LOUISE. You going! Where! Why!

JACOBI. Where, is indifferent to me, so that I leave this place; why, because I cannot bear the unkindness of one person who is dear to me, and who, I once thought, cherished a friendship for me! For fourteen days you have behaved in such a way to me as has embittered my life; and why! Have I been so unfortunate as to offend you, or to excite your displeasure? Why then delay explaining the cause to me? Is it right to sentence any one unheard, and that one a friend—a friend from childhood? Is it right—pardon me, Louise—is it Christian, to be so severe, so immovable! In the sermons which you are so fond of reading, do you find *nothing said of kindness and reconciliation!*"

JACOBI spoke with a fervour, and with such

an almost severe seriousness, as was quite foreign to his gentle and cheerful spirit.

"I have done wrong," replied Louise, with deep emotion, "very wrong, but I have been misled; at some future time perhaps I may tell you how. Since last evening, I know how deceived I have been, how I have deceived myself; and now I know that nobody is to blame in this affair but myself. I have much, very much, to reproach myself with, on account of my reserve towards my own family, and towards you also. Forgive me, best Jacobi," continued she, offering her hand with almost-humility; "forgive me, I have been very unkind to you;"—Louise could not longer restrain her tears—"but," added she, "neither have I been happy either!"

"Thanks! thanks, Louise!" exclaimed Jacobi, grasping her hand, and pressing it to his breast and to his lips; "O how happy this kindness makes me! Now I can breathe again! Now I can leave you with a cheerful heart!"

"But why will you leave us?" asked she in a half-discontented tone.

"Because," answered Jacobi, "it would not give me pleasure to witness a betrothal which will soon be celebrated; because, from your late behaviour, I must be convinced you cannot entertain any warmer sentiment towards me."

"If that were the case," replied she, in the same tone as before, "I should not have been depressed so long."

"How!" exclaimed Jacobi, joyfully. "Ah Louise, what words! what bold hopes may they not excite! Might I mention them to you? might I venture to say to you what I sometimes have thought, and still now think?"

Louise was silent, and Jacobi continued:

"I have thought," said he, "that the humble, unprovided-for Jacobi could offer you a better fortune than your rich neighbour Oestank. I have hoped that my love, the true dedication of my whole life, might make you happy; that a smaller portion of worldly wealth might satisfy you, if it were offered you by a man who knew deeply your worth, and who desired nothing better than to be ennobled by your hand. O, if this beloved hand would guide me through life, how bright, how peaceful would not life be! I should fear neither adversity nor temptation! and how should I not endeavour to be grateful to Providence for his goodness to me! Louise, it is thus that I have thought, and fancied, and dreamed! O tell me, was it only a dream, or may not the dream become a reality?"

Louise did not withdraw the hand which he had taken, but looked upon the speaker with infinite kindness.

"One word," besought Jacobi, "only one word! Might I say my Louise? Louise—no!"

"Speak with my parents," said Louise, deeply blushing, and turning aside her head.

"My Louise!" exclaimed Jacobi, and intoxicated with tenderness and joy, pressed her to his heart.

"Think of my parents," said Louise, gently pushing him back; "without their consent I will make no promise. Their answer shall decide me."

"We will hasten together, my Louise," said he, "and desire their blessing."

"Go alone, best Jacobi," said Louise. "I do

not feel myself calm enough, nor strong enough. I will wait your return here."

With this fifth scene we conjecture that the little drama has arrived at the desired conclusion, and therefore we add no farther scene to what naturally follows.

As the Candidate hastened with lover's speed to Louise's parents he struck hard against somebody in the doorway, who was coming out. The two opponents stepped back each a few paces, and the Candidate and the Landed-proprietor stared in astonishment on each other.

"Pardon me," said the Candidate, and was advancing; but the Landed-proprietor held him back, whilst he inquired with great earnestness, and with a self-satisfied smile, "Hear you, my friend: can you tell me whether Cousin Louise is in the garden? I came this moment from her parents, and would now speak with her. Can you tell me where she is?"

"I—I don't know!" said Jacobi, releasing himself, and hastening with a secret anxiety of mind up to her parents.

In the mean time the Landed-proprietor had caught a glimpse of Louise in the garden, and hastened up to her.

It was, in fact, no surprise to Louise when, after all the preliminary questions, "Cousin, do you like fish? do you like birds?" there came at last the principal question, "Cousin, do you like me?"

To this question it is true she gave a somewhat less blunt, but nevertheless a decided negative reply, although it was gilded over with "esteem and friendship."

The Candidate, on his side, in the fulness and warmth of his heart, laid open to Louise's parents his love, his wishes, and his hopes. It is true that Jacobi was now without any office, as well as without any property; but he had many expectations, and amid these, like a sun and a support, his Excellence D. The Judge was himself no friend to such supports, and Elise did not approve of long engagements: but then both of them loved Jacobi; both of them wished, above all things, the true happiness and well-being of their daughter; and so it happened that, after much counsel, and after Louise had been questioned by her parents, and they found that she had sincerely the same wishes as Jacobi, and that she believed she should be happy with him, and after Jacobi had combated with great fervency and effect every postponement of the betrothal,—that, after all this had been brought to a fortunate issue, he received a formal yes, and he and Louise, on the afternoon of the same day whose morning sun had seen their explanation, were betrothed.

Jacobi was beyond description happy; Louise tranquil but gentle. Henrik declared that her Majesty appeared too merciful. Perhaps all this proceeded from her thoughts being already occupied with the increasing and arranging of Jacobi's wardrobe. She began already to think about putting in hand a fine piece of linen-weaving. She actually had consented to the quick betrothal, principally, as she herself confessed to Eva, "in order to have him better under her hands."

Good reader—and if thou art a Candidate, good Candidate—pardon "our eldest" if she

gave her consent somewhat in mercy. We can assure thee, that our Jacobi was no worse off on that account; so he himself seemed to think, and his joy and cordiality seemed to have great influence in banishing "the cathedral" out of Louise's demeanour.

This view of the connexion, and the hearty joy which Louise's brother and sisters expressed over this betrothal, and which proved how beloved he was by them all, smoothed the wrinkles from the brow of the Judge, and let Elise's heart feel the sweetest satisfaction. Henrik, especially, declared loudly his delight in having his beloved friend and instructor for a brother-in-law—an actual brother.

"And now listen, brother-in-law," said he, fixing his large eyes on Louise; "assume your rights as master of the house properly, brother, dear; and don't let the slippers be master of the house. If you marry a queen, you must be king, you understand that very well, and must take care of your majesty; and if she look like a cathedral, why then do you look like the last judgment, and thunder accordingly! You laugh; but you must not receive any advice so lightly, but lay it seriously to heart, and—but, dear friend, shall we not have a little bowl this evening! shall we not, mother dear! Yes, certainly, we will! I shall have the honour of mixing it myself. Shall we not drink the health of your majesties! I shall mix a bowl—sugar and oranges!—a bowl! a bowl!"

With this exclamation Henrik rushed with outstretched arms to the door, which at that moment opened, and he embraced the worthy Mrs. Gunilla.

"He! man—good heaven! Best-beloved!" exclaimed she, "he, he, he! what is up here! He never thought, did he, that he should take the old woman in his arms! he, he, he!"

Henrik excused himself in the most reverent and cordial manner, explained the cause of his ecstasy, and introduced to her the newly-betrothed. Mrs. Gunilla at first was astonished, and then affected to tears. She embraced Elise, and then Louise, and Jacobi also. "God bless you!" said she, with all her beautiful, quiet cordiality, and then, somewhat pale, seated herself silently on the sofa, and seemed to be thinking sorrowfully how often anxious, dispiriting days succeed the cheerful morning of a betrothal. Whether it was from these thoughts, or that Mrs. Gunilla really felt herself unwell, we know not, but she became paler and paler. Gabriele went out to fetch her a glass of water, and as she opened the door, ran against Mr. Munter, who was just then entering.

With a little cry of surprise she recovered from this unexpected shock. He looked at her with an astonished countenance, and the next moment was surrounded by the other young people.

"Now, see, see! what is all this?" exclaimed he; "why do you overwhelm me thus! Cannot one move any longer in peace! I am not going to dance, Monsieur Henrius! Do not split my ears, Miss Petrea! What! betrothed! What! Who! Our eldest! Body and bones! let me sit down and take a pinch of snuff. Our eldest betrothed! that is dreadful! Ush!—ush! that is quite frightful! uh, uh, uh, uh! that is actually horrible! Ha, u, u, hu!"

The Assessor coughed thus, and blew his nose for a good while, during which the family, who knew his way so well, laughed heartily, with the exception of Louise, who reddened, and was almost angry at his exclamations, especially at that of horrible.

"Nay," said he, rising up and restoring the snuff-box again to his pocket, "one must be contented with what cannot be helped. What is written is written. And, as the Scripture says, blessed are they who increase and multiply the incorrigible human race, so, in heaven's name, good luck to you! Good luck and blessing, dear human beings!" And thus saying, he heartily shook the hands of Jacobi and Louise, who returned his hand-pressure with kindness, although not quite satisfied with the form of his good wishes.

"Never, in all my life," said Henrik, "did I hear a less cheerful congratulation. Mrs. Gunilla and good Mr. Munter to-day must be in melancholy humour: but now they are sitting down by each other, and we may hope that after they have had a comfortable quarrel together, they will cheer up a little."

But no; no quarrel ensued this evening between the two. He had tidings to announce to her, which appeared difficult for him to communicate, and which filled her eyes with tears—Pyrrhus was dead!

"He was yesterday quite well," said Munter, "and licked my hand as I bade him good-night. To-day he took his morning coffee with a good appetite, and then lay down on his cushion to sleep. As I returned home, well-pleased to think of playing with my little comrade, he lay dead on his cushion!"

Mrs. Gunilla and he talked for a long time about the little favourite, and appeared in consequence to become very good friends.

Jeremias Munter was this evening in a more censorious humour than common. His eyes rested with a sad expression on the newly betrothed.

"Yes," said he, as if speaking to himself, "if one had only confidence in oneself; if one was only clear as to one's own motives, then one might have some ground to hope that one could make another happy, and could be happy with them."

"One must know oneself thus well, so far," said Louise, not without a degree of confidence, "that one can be certain of doing so, before one would voluntarily unite one's fate with that of another."

"Thus well!" returned he warmly. "Yes, prosit! Who knows thus well! You do not, dear sister, that I can assure you. Ah!" continued he, with bitter melancholy, "one may be horribly deceived in oneself, and by oneself, in this life. There is no one in this world who, if he rightly understand himself, has not to deplore some infidelity to his friend—his love—his better self! The self-love, the miserable egotism of human nature, where is there a corner that it does not slide into! The wretched little I, how it thrusts itself forward! how thoughts of self, designs for self, blot actions which otherwise might be called good!"

"Do you, then, acknowledge no virtue? Is there, then, no magnanimity, no excellence, which you can admire?" asked some one. "Does not history show us—"

"History!" interrupted he, "don't speak of history—don't bring it forward! No, if I am to believe in virtue, it is such as history cannot meddle with or understand; it is only in that which plays no great part in the world, which never, never could have been applauded by it, and which is not acted publicly. Of this kind it is possible that something entirely beautiful, something perfectly pure and holy, might be found. I will believe in it, although I do not discover it in myself. I have examined my own soul, and can find nothing pure in it; but that it may be found in others, I believe. My head swells with the thought that there may exist perfectly pure and unselfish virtue. Good heaven, how beautiful it is! And wherever such a soul may be found in the world, be it in palace or in hut, in gold or in rags, in man or in woman, who, shunning the praise of the world, fearing the flattery of their own hearts, fulfil unobserved and with honest zeal their duties, however difficult they may be, and who labour and pray in secrecy and stillness; such a being I admire and love, and set high above all the Cæsars and Ciceros of the world!"

During this speech the judge, who had silently risen from his seat, approached his wife, laid his hand gently on her shoulder, and looked round upon his children with glistening eyes.

"Our time," continued the Assessor, with what was an extraordinary enthusiasm for him, "understands but very little this greatness. It praises itself loudly, and on that account it is the less worthy of praise. Everybody will be remarkable, or, at least, will appear so. Everybody steps forward and shouts, I! I! Women even do not any longer understand the nobility of their incognito; they also come forth into notoriety, and shout out their I! Scarcely anybody will say, from the feeling of their own hearts, *Thou*!—and yet it is this same *Thou* which occasions man to forget that selfish I, and in which lies his purest part; his best happiness! To be sure it may seem grand, it may be quite ecstatic, even if it be only for a moment, to fill the world with one's name; but, as in long-past times, millions and millions of men united themselves to build a temple to the Supreme and then themselves sank silently, namelessly, to the dust, having only inscribed His name and His glory; certainly that was far worthier!"

"You talk like King Solomon himself, Mr. Munter!" exclaimed Petrea, quite enraptured: "Ah, you must be an author; you must write a book of—"

"Write!" interrupted he, "On what account should I write! Only to increase the miserable vanity of men! Write! Bah!"

"Every age has its wise men to build up temples," said Henrik, with a noble expression of countenance.

"No!" continued the Assessor, with evident abhorrence, "I will not write! but I will live! I have dreamed sometimes that I could live—"

He ceased; a singular emotion was expressed in his countenance; he arose, and took up a book, into which he looked without reading, and soon after stepped quietly out of the house.

The entertainment in the family this evening was, spite of all that had gone before, very lively; and the result, which was expected in

make happy. The idea will remain with me, that this reserved, melancholy heart might yet expand itself by an affectionate touch; that there are precious stones within it, which would beam brightly for those who called them forth into light.

"Good young maiden, will you venture on the attempt; will you lay your warm hand on the rock; will you breathe softly upon it? O, certainly, under your touch it would soften,—it would bring forth roses for you,—it would exalt itself into a temple for you, a temple vocal with hymns of thanksgiving and love!

"I know that I am old, old before my time; that I am ugly and disagreeable, unpleasant, and perhaps ridiculous; but I do not think that nature intended me to be so. I have gone through life in such infinite solitude; neither father nor mother, brother nor sister, have followed my path; no sunshine has lighted either my childhood or my youth; I have wandered solitarily through life, combating with difficulties. Once I had a friend,—he deserted me, and thence grew the rock about my heart; thence became my demeanour severe, unattractive, and rough. Is it to remain so always? Will my life never bloom upon earth? Will no breath of heaven call forth my roses?

"Do you fear my melancholy temperament? Oh, you have not seen how a glance, a word of yours chases every cloud from my brow; not because you are beautiful, but because you are good and pure. Will you teach me to be good? I will learn willingly from you! From you I would learn to love mankind, and to find more good in the world than I have hitherto done. I will live for you, if not for the world. By my wish the world should know nothing of me, till the cross upon my grave told 'here rests —"

"Oh, it is beautiful to live nameless under the poisoned glance of the world; poisoned, whether it praise or blame; beautiful, not to be polluted by its observation, but more beautiful to be intimately known to one—to possess one gentle and honest friend, and that one a wife! Beautiful to be able to read her pure soul as in a mirror, and to be aware there of every blot on one's own soul, and to be able thus to purify it against the day of the great trial.

"But I speak only of myself and my own happiness. Ah, the egotist—the cursed egotist! Can I make you happy also, Eva? Is it not audacity in me to desire—ah, Eva, I love you inexpressibly!

"I leave the egotist in your hand: do with him what you will, he will ever remain

"Yours."

This letter made Eva very anxious and uneasy. She would so willingly have said yes, and made so good a man happy, but then so many voices within her said no!

She spoke with her parents, with her brother and sisters. "He is so good, so excellent!" said she. "Ah, if I could but properly love him! But I cannot—and then he is so old; and I have no desire to marry; I am so happy in my own home."

"And do not leave it!" was the unanimous chorus of all the family. The father, indeed, was actually provoked by all this courtship; and the mother thought it quite absurd that her blooming Eva and Jeremias Munter should go together. No one voice spoke for him but Petrea's, and a silent sigh in Sara's own bosom. The result of all this consideration was, that Eva

wrote with tearful eyes the following answer to her lover:

"My best, and truly good Friend!

"Ah! do not be angry with me that I cannot become that which you wish. I shall certainly not marry. I am too happy in my own home and family for that. Ah! this is to be sure egotistical, but I cannot do otherwise. Forgive me, I am so very much, so heartily attached to you; and I should never be happy again if you love not hitherto as formerly

"Your little

"Eva."

In the evening Eva received a beautiful and costly work-box, with the following lines:

"Yes, yes, I can very well believe that the rough rock would be appalling. You will not venture to lay your delicate white hand upon it, little Miss Eva; will not breathe upon my poor roses! Let them then remain in their grave!

"I shall now make a journey, nor see you again a year and a day. But, good heavens! as you have given me a basket,* you shall receive in return a little box. I bought it for my—bride, Eva! Yet now, after all, Eva shall have it; shall keep it for my sake. She may return it when I cease to be

"Her true and devoted Friend."

"Do you think she is sorry for what she has done, dearest?" asked the Judge anxiously from his wife, as he saw Eva's hot tears falling on the work-box;—"but it cannot be helped. She marry! and that too with Munter! She is indeed nothing but a child! But that is just the way; when one has educated one's daughters, and taught them something of good manners, just when one has begun to have real pleasure in them, that one must lose them—must let them go to China if the lover chance to be a Chinese! It is intolerable! It is abominable! I would not wish my worst enemy the pain of having grown-up daughters. Don't you think that Schwartz is already beginning to have serious thoughts about Sara? Good gracious! if we should yet have the plague of another lover!"

CHAPTER XXV.

MORE COURTSHIP STILL.

JUDGE FRANK had, unknown to himself, spoken a true word. It was true that Schwartz had drawn ever narrower circles around Sara, and at the very time when she would appear free from his influence her temper became more uncertain and suspicious. The mother, uneasy about this connexion, no longer allowed her to be alone with him during the music lesson, and this watchfulness excited Sara's pride, and was received with less patience, and was even more disregarded than the first gentle remonstrances. The Judge was the only person before whom Sara did not exhibit the dark side of her character. His glance, his presence, seemed to have a certain power over her; besides which, she was, perhaps, more beloved by him than by any other member of the family, with the exception of Petrea.

One evening, Sara sat silently in the library, supporting

* "To give a gentleman a basket" he is a rejected lover.

head on her hand. Petrea sat at her feet on a low stool; she also was silent, but every now and then looked up to Sara with a tender troubled expression, whilst in return Sara looked down towards her thoughtfully, and almost gloomily.

"Petrea," said she, speaking low, "what would you say if I should leave you suddenly to go into the wide world, and should never return to you?"

"What should I say," answered Petrea, with a violent quiver of tears: "ah, I should say nothing at all, but should lie down and die of grief!"

"Do you really love me then so, Petrea?" asked she.

"Do I love you!" returned Petrea, "Ah, Sara, if you go away, take me with you as maid, as servant—I will do every thing for you!"

"Good Petrea!" whispered Sara, laying her arm round her neck and kissing her weeping eyes, "continue to love me, but do not follow me!"

"It seems terribly sultry to me, this evening!" said Henrik wearily: "We cannot manage any family assembling to-night—not a bit of music—not a bit of entertainment. The air seems as if an earthquake were at hand. I fancy that Africa sends us something of a tempest. Petrea is crying like the rainy season; and there go the people in twos-and-twos and weep, and set themselves in corners and whisper and mutter, and kiss one another, from my God-fearing parents down to my silly little sisters! The King and Queen, they go and seat themselves just as it happens on living or dead things—they had nearly seated themselves on me as I sat uncomfortably on the sofa; but I made a turn about *tout d'un coup*."

"Betrothed! horribly wearisome folks! are they not, Gabriele? they cannot hear, they cannot see; they could not speak, I fancy, but with one another!"

A light was burning in Sara's chamber far into the night. She was busied for a long time with her journal; she wrote with a flying but unsteady hand.

"So, to-morrow; to-morrow all will be said, and I—shall be bound."

"I know that is but of little importance, and yet I have such a horror of it! O the power of custom and of form."

"I know very well whom I could love; there is a purity in his glance, a powerful purity which penetrates me—but how would he look on me if he saw—"

"I must go—I have no choice left! S. has me in his net—the money which I have borrowed from him binds me so fast!—for I cannot bear that they should know it, and despise me! I know that they would impoverish themselves in order to release me, but I will not so humiliate myself."

"And why do I speak of release? I go hence to a life of freedom and honour. I bow myself under the yoke, but for a moment, only in order to exalt myself the more proudly. Now there is no more time to tremble and to waver—away with these tears! And thou, Volney, proud, strong thinker, stand by me! Teach me, when all others turn away, how I may rely on my own strength!"

She exchanged the pen for the book, of midnight struck before she fell into a tranquil and cold in order of sleep.

The earthquake of which Henrik had spoken, came the next day, the signal of which was a letter from Schwartz to the Judge, in which he solicited the hand of Sara. His only wealth was his profession; but with this alone he was convinced that his wife would want nothing: he was just about setting out on a journey through Europe, and wished to be accompanied by Sara, of whose consent and acquiescence he was quite sure.

A certain degree of self-appreciation in a man was not at any time displeasing to Judge Frank, but this letter breathed a supercilious assurance, a professional arrogance, which were the very opposites of his own disposition. Besides this, he was wounded by the tone of pretension in which Schwartz spoke of one who was as dear to him as his own daughter, and the thought of her being united to a man of Schwartz's character was intolerable to him. He was almost persuaded that Sara did not love him, and burned with impatience to repel his pretensions, and to remove him at the same time from his house.

Elise agreed perfectly in the opinion of her husband, but was less confident than he regarding Sara's state of feeling with respect to the affair. She was summoned to their presence. The Judge handed to her Schwartz's letter, and awaited impatiently her remarks upon it. Her colour paled before the grave and searching glances which were riveted upon her, but she declared herself quite willing to accept her lover's proposal.

Astonishment and vexation painted themselves on the countenance of her adopted father.

"Ah, Sara," said the mother, after a short silence, "have you well considered this? Do you think that Schwartz is a man who can make a wife happy?"

"He can make me happy," returned Sara; "happy according to my own mind."

"You can never, never," said the mother, "enjoy domestic happiness with him!"

"He loves me," returned Sara, "and he can give me a happiness which I never enjoyed here. I lost early both father and mother, and in the home into which I was received out of charity, all become colder and colder towards me!"

"Ah, do not think so, Sara!" said the mother. "But even if this were the case, may not some little of it be your own fault? Do you really do anything to make yourself beloved? Do you strive against that which makes you less amiable?"

"I can renounce such love," said Sara, "as will not take me with my faults. Nature gave me strong feelings and inclinations, and I cannot bring them into subjection."

"You will not, Sara," was the reply.

"I cannot! and it may be that I will not!" said she. "I will not submit myself to the subjugation and taming which has been allotted as the share of the woman! Why should I? I feel strength in myself to break up a new path for myself. I will lead a fresh and an independent life! I will live a bright artiste-life, free from the trammels and the Lilliputian considerations of domestic life. I will be free! I will not, as now, be watched and suspected, and be under a state of espionage! I will be free from the displeasure and blame which now dog my footsteps! This treatment it is, mother, which has determined my resolution."

"If," answered the mother in a tremulous voice, and deeply affected by Sara's words and tone, "I have erred towards you—and I may have done so—I know well that it has been from temper, or out of want of tenderness towards you. I have spoken to and warned you from the best conviction; I have sincerely endeavoured and desired what is best for you, and this you will some time or other come to see even better than I.* You will perhaps come to see that it would have been good for you if you had lent a more willing ear to my maternal counsellings; will perhaps come to deplore that you rewarded the love I cherished for you with reproaches and bitterness!"

"Then let me go!" said Sara, with gentler voice, "we do not accord well together. I embitter your life, and you make—perhaps you cannot make mine happy. Let me go with him, who will love me with all my faults, who can and will open a freer scope to my powers and talents than I have hitherto had."

"Ah, Sara," returned Elise, "will you obtain in this freer field, a better happiness than can be afforded you by a domestic circle, by the tenderness of true friends, and a happy domestic life?"

"Are you then so happy, my mother?" interrupted Sara with an ironical smile, and a searching glance; "are you then so happy in this circle, and this domestic life, which you praise so highly, that you thus repeat what has been said on the subject from the beginning of the world. Those perpetual cares in which you have passed your days, those trifling cares and thoughts for every-day necessities, which are so opposite to your own nature, are they then so pleasant, so captivating? Have you not renounced many of your beautiful gifts—your pleasure in literature and music—nay, in short, what is the most lovely part of life, in order to bury yourself in concealment and oblivion; and there like the silkworm to spin your own sepulchre of the threads which another will wind off? You bow your own will continually before that of another; your innocent pleasures you sacrifice daily either to him or to others: are you so very happy amid all these renunciations?"

The Judge rose up passionately; went several times up and down the room, and placed himself at last directly opposite to Sara, leaning his back to the stove, and listening attentively the answer of his wife.

"Yes, Sara, I am happy!" answered she, with an energy very unusual in her: "yes, I am happy! Whenever I have made any sacrifice, I receive a rich return. And if there be moments when I feel painfully any renunciation which I have, there are others, and far more of them, in which I congratulate myself on all that I have won. I am become improved through the husband whom God has given to me; through my children, through my duties, through the desires and the wants which I have overcome at his side—yes, Sara, above all things, through him, his affection, his excellence, am I improved, and feel myself happier every day. Love, Sara, love changes sacrifice into pleasure, and makes renunciation sweet! I thank God for my lot, and only wish that I were worthier of it!"

"It may be!" said Sara proudly, "every one

* All mothers speak thus—but not all, nay, not many with the same right as Elise.

has his own sphere. But the tame happiness of the dove suits not the eagle!"

"Sara!" exclaimed the Judge in a tone of severe displeasure.

The mother, unable longer to repress the outbreak of excited feeling, left the room with her handkerchief to her eyes.

"For shame, Sara," said the Judge with severe gravity, and standing before her with a reproving glance, "for shame! this arrogance goes too far!"

She trembled now before his eye as she had done once before; a remembrance from the days of her childhood awoke within her; her eyelids sunk, and a burning crimson covered her face.

"You have forgotten yourself," continued he calmly, but severely, "and in your childish haughtiness have only shown how far you are below that worth and excellence which you cannot understand, and which, in your present state of mind, you never can emulate. Your own calm judgment will make the sharpest reproaches on this late scene, and will, nay must, lead you to throw yourself at the feet of your mother. All, however, that I now ask from you is, that you think over your intentions rationally. How is it possible, Sara, that you overlook your own inconsistency? You argue zealously against domestic life—against the duties of marriage, and yet, at the same time, wilfully determine to tie those bonds with a man who will make them actual fetters for you."

"He will not fetter me," returned she, "he has promised it—he has sworn it! I shall not subject myself to him as a wife, but I shall stand at his side as an equal, as an artiste, and step with him into a world beautiful and rich in honours, which he will open to me."

"Ah, mere talk!" exclaimed the Judge. "Folly, folly! How can you be so foolish, and believe in such false show? The state gives your husband a power over you which he will not fail to abuse,—that I can promise you, from what I know of his character, and from what I now discover of yours. No woman can withdraw from a connexion of this kind unpunished, more especially under the circumstances in which you are placed. Sara, you do not love the man to whom you are about to unite yourself, and it is impossible that you can love him. No true esteem, no pure regard binds you to him."

"He loves me," answered Sara with trembling lips; "I admire his power and artistic spirit;—he will conduct me to independence and honour! It is no fault of mine that the lot of woman is so contracted and miserable—that she must bind herself in order to become free!"

"Only as a means?" asked he; "the holiest tie on earth only as a means, and for what? For a pitiable and ephemeral chase after happiness, which you call honour and freedom. Poor, deceived Sara! Are you so misled, so turned aside from the right? Is it possible that the miserable book of a writer, as full of pretension as weak and superficial, has been able thus to misguide you?" and with these words he took Volney's Ruins out of his pocket, and threw it upon the table.

Sara started and reddened: "Ah," said she, "this is only another instance of espionage over me."

"Not so," replied the Judge calmly. "I was this day in your room; you had been lying on the table, and I took it, in

might speak with you about it, and prevent Petrea's young steps from treading this path of error without a guide."

"People may think what they please," said Sara, "of the influence of the book, but I conceive that author deserves least of all the epithet weak."

"When we have followed his counsel," returned he, "and resemble the wreck which the waves have thrown up here, then you may judge of the strength and skill of the steersman! My child do not follow him. A more mature, a more logical power of mind, will teach you how little he knows of the ocean of life, of its breakers and its depths—how little he understands the true compass."

"Ah!" said Sara, "these dangers, nay, even shipwreck itself, appear to me preferable to the still, windless water which the so-much-be-praised haven of domestic life represents. You speak, my father, of chimeras; but tell me, is not the so-lauded happiness of domestic life more a chimera than any other? When the saloon is set in order, one does not see the broom and the dusting-brush, that have been at work in it, and the million grains of dust which have filled the air; one forgets that they have ever been there. So it is with domestic and family life; one persists wilfully in only seeing its beautiful moments, and in passing over, in not noticing at all, what are less beautiful, or indeed, are repulsive."

"All depends upon which are the predominant," replied he, half smiling at Sara's simile. "Thus, then, if it be more frequently disorderly than orderly, if the air be more frequently filled with dust than it is with pure and fresh, than the devil may dwell there, but not I! I know very well that there are homes enough on earth where there are dust-filled rooms, but that must be the fault of the inhabitants. On them alone depends the condition of the house; from those which may not unjustly be called an ante-room of hell, to those again which, spite of their earthly imperfections, spite of many a visitation of duster and dusting-brush, yet may deserve the names of courts of heaven. And where, Sara, where in this world will you find an existence free from earthly dust? And is that of which you complain so bitterly anything else than the earthly nusk which encloses every mortal existence of man as well as of woman; it is the soil in which the plant must grow; it is the chrysalis in which the larva becomes ripe for its change of life! Can you actually be blind to that higher and nobler life which never develops itself more beautifully than in a peaceful home? Can you deny that it is in the sphere of family and friendship where man lives most perfectly and best, as citizen of an earthly and of a heavenly kingdom? Can you deny how great and noble is the efficacy of woman in private life, be she married or single, if she only endeavour—"

"Ah," said Sara, interrupting him, "the sphere of private life is too narrow for me! I require a larger one, in order to breathe freely and freshly."

"In pure affection," replied the Judge, "in friendship, and in the exercise of kindness, there is large and fresh breathing space; the air of eternity plays through it. In intellectual development—and the very highest may be arrived at in private life—the whole world opens itself to the eye of man, and infinite treasures are offered to his soul, more, far more, than he can ever appropriate to himself!"

"But the artist," argued Sara, "the artist can-

not form himself at home—he must try himself on the great theatre of the world. Is his bent only a chimera, my father? And are those distinguished persons who present the highest pleasures to the world through their talents; to whom the many look up with admiration and homage; around whom the great, and the beautiful, and agreeable collect themselves, are they fools?—are they blind hunters after happiness? Ah, what lot can well be more glorious than theirs! Oh, my father, I am young; I feel a power in myself which is not a common one—my heart throbs for a freer and more beautiful life! Desire not that I should constrain my own nature; desire not that I should compress my beautiful talents into a sphere which has no charms for me!"

"I do not depreciate, certainly, the profession of the artist," replied the Judge, "nor the value of his agency: in its best meaning, his is as noble as any; but it is this pure bent, this notion of it, which impels you, which animates you! Sara, examine your own heart; it is vanity and selfish ambition which impel you. It is the arrogance of your eighteen years, and some degree of talent, which make you overlook all that is good in your present lot, which make you disdain to mature yourself nobly and independently in the domestic circle. It is a deep mistake, which will now lead you to an act blameable in the eyes of God and man, and which blinds you to the dark side of the life which you covet. Nevertheless, there is none darker, none in which the changes of fortune are more dependent on miserable accidents. An accident may deprive you of your beauty, or your voice, and with these you lose the favour of the world in which you have placed your happiness. Besides this, you will not always continue at eighteen, Sara: by the time you are thirty all your glory will be past, and then—then what will you have collected for the remaining half of life? You will have roited for a short time in order then to starve; since, so surely as I stand here, with this haughty and vain disposition, and with the husband whom you will have chosen, you will come to want; and too late, you will look back in your misery, full of remorse, to the virtue and to the true life which you have renounced."

Sara was silent, she was shaken by the words and by the countenance of her adopted father.

"And how perfectly different it might be!" continued he with warmth; "how beautiful, how full of blessing might not your life and your talents be! Sara! I have loved you and love you still like my own daughter—will you not listen to me as to a father? Answer me—have you had to give up anything in this house, which, with any show of reason, you might demand? and have we spared any possible care for your education or your accomplishments?"

"No," replied Sara, "all have been kind, very kind to me."

"Well, then," exclaimed the Judge, with increasing warmth and cordiality, "depend upon your mother, and me, that you will have no cause of complaint. I am not without property and connexions. I will spare no means of cultivating your talents, and then if your turn for art is a true one, when it has been cultivated to its utmost it shall not be concealed from a world which can enjoy and reward it. But remain under our protection, and do not cast yourself, inexperienced as you are, on a world which will only lead you more astray. Do not, in order to

win an ideal liberty, give your hand to a man inferior to you in accomplishments; to a man whom you do not love, and whom, morally speaking, you cannot esteem. Descend into your own heart and see its error while there is yet time to retrieve it, before you are crushed by your own folly. Do not fly from affectionate careful friends—do not fly from the paternal roof in blind impatience of disagreeables, to remove which depends perhaps only on yourself! My child! I have not taken you under my roof in order that you should make yourself the victim of ruin and misfortune! Pause, Sara, and reflect, I pray you, I conjure you! make not yourself wretched! When I took you from the death-bed of your father, I threw my arms around you to shield you from the winds of autumn—I clasp them over again around you, in order to shield you from far more dangerous winds—Sara, my child, fly not from this house!"

Sara trembled, she was violently agitated, and leaned her head with indescribable emotions against her adopted father, who clasped her tenderly to his bosom.

It is not difficult to say whether they were good or bad angels who triumphed in Sara, as she, after a moment of violent inward struggle, pushed from her the paternal friend and said, with averted countenance, "It is in vain, my determination is taken. I shall become the wife of Schwartz, and go where my fate leads me!"

The Judge started up, stamped on the floor, and pale with anger exclaimed, with flashing eyes, "Obdurate one! since neither love nor prayers have power over you, you must listen to another mode of speech! I have the right of a guardian over you, and I forbid this unholy marriage! I forbid you to leave my house! You hear me, and you shall obey!"

Sara stood up as pale as death, and with an insolent expression riveted her large eyes upon him, while he, too, fixed his upon her with all the force of his peculiar earnestness and decision. It seemed as if each would look the other through; as if each in this contest would measure his strength against the other.

Suddenly her arms were flung wildly round his neck, a burning kiss was pressed upon his lips, and the next moment she was out of the room.

Elise sat in her boudoir. She still wept bitter tears. It was twilight, and her knees were suddenly embraced, and her hands and her dress were covered with kisses and with tears. When she put forth her hands to raise the one who embraced her, she had vanished. "Sara, Sara! where are you?" exclaimed she, full of anxiety.

Petrea came down from her chamber; she met some one, who embraced her, pressed her lips to her forehead, and whispered, "forget me!"

"Sara, Sara! where are you going?" exclaimed she, terrified and running after her to the house door.

"Where is Sara?" inquired the Judge violently above in the chambers of his daughters. "Where is Sara?" inquired he below in the library.

"Ah!" exclaimed Petrea, who now rushed in weeping, "she is this moment gone out—out into the street; she almost ran. She forbade me to follow her. Ah, she certainly never will come back again!"

"The devil!" said the Judge, hastening from the room, and taking up his hat, went out. Far off in the street he saw a female figure which,

with only a handkerchief thrown over her head and shoulders, was hastening onward, and who, in spite of the twilight, he recognised to be Sara. He hastened after her;—she looked round, saw him, and fled. Certain now that he was not mistaken, he followed, and was almost near enough to take hold of her, when she suddenly turned aside, and rushed into a house—it was that of Schwartz. He followed with the quickness of lightning; followed her up the steps, and was just laying his hand on her, when she vanished through a door. The next moment he too opened it, and saw her—in the arms of Schwartz!

The two stood together embracing, and evidently prepared to defy him. He stood for some moments silent before them, regarding them with an indescribable look of wrath, contempt, and sorrow. He looked upon the pale breathless Sara, and covered his eyes with his hand: the next moment, however, he seemed to collect himself, and with all the calm and respect commanding dignity of a parent, he grasped her hand and said, "You now follow me home. On Sunday the banns shall be proclaimed!"

Sara followed. She took his arm, and with a drooping head, and without a word, accompanied him home.

All there was disquiet and sorrow. But notwithstanding the general discontent with Sara and her marriage, there was not one of the family who did not busy themselves earnestly in her outfit. Louise, who blamed more than all the rest, gave herself most trouble about it.

Sara behaved as if she never observed how everybody was working for her, and passed her time either over her harp, or solitary in her own room. Any intercourse with the members of the family seemed to have become painful to her, while Petrea's tenderness and tears were received with indifference; nay, even with sternness.

CHAPTER XXVI.

DEPARTURE.

SARA'S joyless marriage was over; and the hour was come in which she was to leave that home and family which had so affectionately received her, and which now with solicitude and the tenderest care provided for her wants in her new connexion.

In the hour of separation, the crust of ice which had hitherto surrounded her being broke, she sank, weeping violently, at the feet of her foster-parents.

The Judge was deeply affected: "You have had your own will, Sara," said he, in a firm but mournful voice, "may you be happy! Some few warnings I have given you, do not forget them; they are the last! If you should be deceived in the hopes which now animate you—if you should be unfortunate—unfortunate, or criminal, then remember—then remember, Sara, that here you have father and mother, and sisters, who will receive you with open arms; then remember that you have here family and home!"

He ceased: drew her a little aside, took her hand, and pressed a bank-note in it. "Take this," said he, tenderly, "as a little help in the hour of need. No, you must not refuse it from your foster-father. Take it for his love's sake, you will some time need it!"

It was with difficulty that the Judge had so far preserved his calmness, he now pressed her vio-

lently to his breast: kissed her brow and lips, while his tears flowed abundantly. The mother and sisters too surrounded her weeping. At that moment the door opened, and Schwartz entered. "The carriage waits," said he, with a dark glance on the mournful group. Sara tore herself from the arms which would have held her fast, and rushed out of the room.

A few seconds more and the travelling carriage rolled away.

"She is lost!" exclaimed the Judge to his wife with bitter pain. "I feel it in myself that she is lost! Her death would have been less painful to me than this marriage."

For many days he continued silent and melancholy.

CHAPTER XXVII.

LITTLE SCENES.

The past episode had passed through the house like a whirlwind. When it was over the heaven cleared itself anew, and they were able to confess that a more joyful tranquillity had diffused itself over all. There was no one who did not think of Sara with sympathy, who did not weep sometimes at her violent separation from the family: but there was no one, with the exception of the Judge and Petrea, who did not feel her absence to be a secret relief; for one unquiet temper, and one full of pretension, can disturb a whole household, and make the most exquisite natural gifts of no account.

The Judge missed a daughter from the beloved circle; missed that beautiful, richly-endowed girl, and could not think of her future prospects without bitter anxiety. Petrea wept the object of her youthful admiration and homage, but consoled herself with the romantic plans she formed for seeing her again, in all of which she gave to herself the province of guardian angel, either as the queen of a desert island, or as a warrior bleeding for her, or as a disguised person who unloosed her bonds in the depths of a dungeon in order to put them on herself: in short, in all possible ways in the world except the possible one.

Sara wrote soon after her separation from her friends; she spoke of the past with gratitude, and of the future with hope. The letter exhibited a certain decision and calmness—a certain seriousness which diffused through the family a satisfactory ease of mind with regard to her future fate. Elise was ever inclined to hope for the best, and young people are always optimists: the Judge said nothing which might disturb the peace of his family, whilst Louise alone shook her head and sighed.

After the many disturbing circumstances which had lately occurred in the family, all seemed now to long after repose, and the ability to enjoy a quieter domestic life. Occupations of all kind, those simple, but cheerful labours of well-regulated life, went on cheerfully and comfortably under the eye of Louise. There was no want in the house of joyful hours, sunshine of every kind, and entertainment full of interest. The newspapers which the Judge took in, and which kept the family *au courant* of the questions of the day, furnished materials for much development of mind, for much conversation and much thought, especially among the young people. The father had great plea-

sure in hearing thus their interchange of opinion, though he himself seldom mingled in their conversation, with the exception of now and then a guiding word.

"I fancy all is going on quite right," said he joyfully to his wife one day. "The children live gaily at home, and are preparing themselves for life. Indeed, if they only once open their eyes and ears, they will find subjects enough on which to use them; and will be astonished at all that life will present them with. It is well when home furnishes nourishment for mind as well as heart and body. I rejoice too, extremely, over our new house. Every land, every climate, has its own advantages as well as its own difficulties, and the economy of life must be skilfully adjusted if it is to be maintained with honour and advantage. Our country, which compels us to live so much in the house, seems thereby to admonish us to a more concentrated, and at the same time more quiet and domestic life, on which account we need, above all things, comfortable houses, which are able to advance and advantage soul as well as body. Thank God! I fancy ours is pretty good for that purpose, and in time may yet be better; the children too look happy; Gabriele grows now every day, and Louise has grown over all our heads!"

The young people were very much occupied with plans for the future. Eva and Louise built all their castles in the air together. A great intimacy had grown up between these two sisters since they were alone during the absence of the others at Axelholm. One might say that ever since that evening, when they sat together eating grapes and reading a novel, the seed of friendship which had long been sprouting in their hearts shot forth thence its young leaves. Their castles in the air were no common castles of romance, they had for their foundation the prosaic but beautiful thoughts of gaining for themselves an independent livelihood in the future—for the parents had early taught their daughters to direct their minds to this object—and hence beautiful establishments were founded, partly for friendship and partly for humanity: for young girls are always great philanthropists.

Jacobi also had many schemes for the future of himself and his wife, and Louise many schemes how to realize them. In the mean time there were many processes about kisses. Louise wished to establish a law that not more than three a day should be allowed, against which Jacobi protested both by word and deed, on which occasions Gabriele always ran away hastily and indignantly.

Petrea read English with Louise, arranged little festivities for her and the family; wept every evening over Sara, and beat her brains every morning over "the Creation of the World," whilst the good parents watched ever observantly over them all.

No one, however, enjoyed the present circumstances of the family so much as Henrik. After he had succeeded in inducing his sisters to use more lively exercise, he devoted himself more exclusively to his favourite studies, history and philosophy. Often he took his book and wandered with it whole days in the country, but every evening at seven he punctually joined the family circle, and was there the merriest of the merry.

"We live now right happily," said one

evening in confidential discourse with his mother; "and I, for my part, never enjoyed life so much. I feel now that my studies will really mend, and that something can be made of me. And when I have studied for a whole day, and that not fruitlessly either, and then come of an evening to you and my sisters, and see all here so friendly, so bright and cheerful, life seems so agreeable! I feel myself so happy, and almost wish it might always remain as it is now!"

"Ah, yes!" answered the mother, "if we could always keep you with us, my Henrik! But I know that won't do, you must soon leave us again; and then, when you have finished your studies, you must have your own house."

"And then, mother, you shall come to me!" This had been years before, and still was Henrik's favourite theme, and the mother listened willingly to it.

Several poems which Henrik wrote about this time seemed to indicate the most decided poetical talent, and gave his mother and sisters the greatest delight, whilst they excited, at the same time, great attention among the friends of the family. The Judge alone looked on gloomily.

"You will spoil him," exclaimed he one evening to his wife and daughters, "if you make him fancy that he is something extraordinary, before he is in any thing out of the common way. I confess that his poetizing is very much against my wish. When one is a man, one should have something much more important to do than to sigh, and sing about this and that future life. If he were likely to be a Thorild,* or any other of our greatest poets—but I see no signs of that! and this poetasterism, this literary idleness, which perpetually either lifts young people above the clouds or places them under the earth, so that for pure cloud and dust they are unable to see the good noble gifts of actual life—I would the devil had it! The direction which Henrik is now taking grieves me seriously. I had rejoiced myself so in the thought of his being a first-rate miner—in his being instrumental in turning to good account our mines, our woods and streams, those noblest foundations of Sweden's wealth, and to which it was worth while devoting a good head; and now, instead of that, he hangs his on one side; sits with a pen in his hand, and rhymes 'face' and 'grace,' 'heart' and 'smart.' It is quite contrary to my feelings! I wish Sternhok would come here soon. Now there's a fellow! he will turn out something first-rate! I wish he were coming soon; perhaps he might influence Henrik, and induce him to give up this verse-making, which, perhaps, at bottom, is only vanity."

Elise and the daughters were silent. For a considerable time now, Elise had accustomed herself to silence when her husband grumbled. But often—whenever it was necessary—she would return to the subject of his discontent at a time when he was calm, and then talk it over with him; and this line of tactics succeeded admirably. She made use of them on the present occasion.

"Ernst," said she to him in the evening, "it grieves me that you are so displeased with Henrik's poetical bent. Ah! it has delighted me so much, precisely because I fancied that it is real, and that in this case it may be as useful

as any other can be. Still I never will encourage any thing in him which is opposed to your wishes."

"My Elise," returned he mildly, "manage this affair according to your own convictions and conscience. It is very probable that you are right, and that I am wrong. All that I beseech of you is, that you watch over yourself, in order that affection to your first-born may not mislead you to mistake for excellence what is only mediocre, and his little attempts for masterpieces. Henrik may be, if he can, a distinguished poet and literary man; but he must not as yet imagine himself anything: above all things, he must not suppose it possible to be a distinguished man in any profession without preparing himself by serious labour, and without first of all becoming a thinking being. If he were this, I promise you that I should rejoice over my son, let him be what profession he would—a worker in thought, or a worker in mountains. And for this very reason one must be careful not to value too highly these poetical blossoms. If vanity remains in him he never will covet serious renown in any thing."

"You are right, Ernst," said his wife, with all the cordiality of inward conviction.

Henrik also longed earnestly for Sternhok's arrival. He wished to show him his work; he longed to measure his new historical and philosophical knowledge against that of his friend; he longed, in one word, to be esteemed by him; for Henrik's gentle and affectionate nature had always felt itself powerfully attracted by the energetic and, as one may say, metallic nature of the other, and ever since the years of their boyhood had the esteem and friendship of Sternhok been the goal of Henrik's endeavours, and of his warm, although till now unattainable, wishes. Sternhok had hitherto always behaved towards Henrik with a certain friendly indifference, never as a companion and friend.

Sternhok came. He was received by the whole family with the greatest cordiality, but by no one with a warmer heart than Henrik.

There was even externally the greatest dissimilarity between these two young men. Henrik was remarkable for extraordinary, almost feminine, beauty; his figure was noble but slender, and his glance glowing though somewhat dreamy. Sternhok, some years Henrik's senior, had become early a man. All with him was muscular, firm, and powerful; his countenance was intelligent without being handsome, and a star, as it were, gleamed in his clear, decided eye; such a star as is often prophetic of fate, and over whose path fortunate stars keep watch.

Some days after Sternhok's arrival Henrik became greatly changed. He had become quiet, and there was an air of depression on his countenance. Sternhok now, as he had always done, did not appear unfriendly to Henrik, but still paid little attention to him. He occupied himself very busily, partly with trying chemical experiments with Jacobi and the ladies, and partly in the evening, and even into the night, in making astronomical observations with his excellent telescope. One of the beaming stars to which the observations of the young astronomer were industriously directed, was called afterward in the family Sternhok's star. All gathered themselves around the interesting and well-informed young man. The Judge took the greatest delight in his conversation, and asserted before

* Thomas Thorild, born 1753, died 1808, an eminent Swedish poet.

his family more than once his pleasure in him, and the hopes which the nation itself might have of him. The young student of mining was a favourite with the Judge also, because, besides his extraordinary knowledge, he behaved always with the greatest respect towards older and more experienced persons.

"See, Henrik," said his father to him one day, after a conversation with Sternbok, "what I call poetry, real poetry, it is this—to tame the rivers, and to compel their wild falls to produce wealth and comfort, while woods are felled on their banks and corn-fields cultivated; human dwellings spring up, and cheerful activity and joyful voices enliven the country. Look! that may be called a beautiful creation!"

Henrik was silent.

"But," said Gabriele, with all her natural refinement, "to be happy in these homes, they must be able to read a pleasant book or to sing a beautiful song, else their lives, spite of all their waterfalls, would be very dry!"

The Judge smiled, kissed his little daughter, and tears of delight filled his eyes.

Henrik, in the mean time, had gone into another room, and seated himself at the window. His mother followed him.

"How do you feel, my Henrik?" said she, affectionately, gently taking away the hand which shaded his eyes. His hand was concealing his tears. "My good, good youth!" exclaimed she, her eyes also overflowing with tears, and throwing her arms around him; "Now see!" began she consolingly, "you should not distress yourself when your father speaks in a somewhat one-sided manner. You know perfectly well how infinitely good and just he is, and that if he be only once convinced of the genuineness of your poetic talent, he will be quite contented. He is only now afraid of your stopping short in mediocrity. He would be pleased and delighted if you obtained honour in your own peculiar way."

"Ah!" said Henrik, "if I only knew whether or not I had a peculiar way—a peculiar vocation. But since Sternbok has been here, and I have talked with him, everything, both externally and internally, seems altered. Sternbok has shown me how very little I know of what I supposed myself to know a great deal, and what bungling my work is! I see it now perfectly, and it distresses me. How strong-minded and powerful Sternbok is! I wish I were able to resemble him! But it is impossible, I feel myself such a mere nothing beside him! And yet, when I am alone either with my books, or out in the free air with the trees, the rocks, the waters, the winds around me, and with heaven above, thoughts arise in me, feelings take possession of me, nameless sweet feelings, and then expressions and words speak in me which affect me deeply, and give me inexpressible delight; then all that is great and good in humanity is so present with me; then I have a foretaste of harmony in everything, of God in everything; and it seems to me as if words thronged themselves to my lips to sing forth the gloriousness of what I perceive. In such moments I feel something great within me, and I fancy that my songs would find an echo in every heart. Yes, it is thus, that I feel sometimes; but when I see Sternbok, all is vanished, and I feel so little, so poor, I am compelled to believe that I am a dreamer and a fool!"

"My good youth," said the mother, "you mistake yourself. Your gifts and Sternbok's are so dissimilar: but if you employ your talents with

sincerity and earnestness, they will in their turn bring forth fruit. I confess to you, Henrik, that it was, and still is, one of my most lively wishes that one of my children might distinguish themselves in the fields of literature. Literature has furnished to me my most beautiful enjoyments, and in my younger years I myself was not without my ambition in this way. I see in you my own powers more richly blossoming. I myself bloom forth in them, my Henrik, and in my hopes of you. Ah! might I live to the day in which I saw you honoured by your native land; in which I saw your father proud of his son, and I myself able to gladden my heart with the fruit of your mind, your work—O then I would gladly die!"

Enthusiastic fire flamed in Henrik's looks, and on his cheeks, as while, embracing his mother, he said, "No, you shall live, mother, to be honoured on account of your son. He promises that you shall have joy in him!"

The sunbeam which just then streamed into the room fell upon Henrik's beautiful hair, which shone like gold. The mother saw it—saw silently a prophesying in it, and a sunbright smile diffused itself over her countenance.

Petrea read the "Magic Ring." She ought properly to have read it aloud to the family circle in an evening, and then its dangerous magic would have been decreased; but she read it beforehand, privately to herself during the night, and it drew her into the bewildering magic circle. She thought of nothing, dreamed of nothing, but wonderful adventures; wonderfully beautiful ladies, and wonderfully brave heroes! She was herself always one of them, worshipped or worshipping: now combating, cross in hand, against witches and dragons; now wandering in dreamy moonlight among lilies in the Lady Minnetrost's castle. It seemed as if the chaotic confusion of Petrea's brain had here taken shape and stature, and she now took possession with redoubled force of the phantasy world, which once before, under the guise of the wood-god, had carried away her childish mind and conducted her into false tracks; and it was so even now; for while she moved night and day in a dream-world in which she luxuriated to exultation, in magnificent and wonderful scenes, in which she herself always played a part, she got on but lamentably in real and everyday life. The head in which so many splendid pictures and grand schemes were agitating, looked generally something like a bundle of flax; she never noticed the holes and specks in her dress, nor her ragged stockings and trodden-down shoes; she forgot all her little, everyday business, and whatever she had in her hand, she either lost or dropped.

She had besides, a passion for cracking almonds. "A passion," Louise said, "as expensive as it was noisy, and which never was stronger than when she went about under the influence of the magic ring; and that perpetual crack, crack, which was heard wherever she went, and the almond shells on which people trod, or which hung to the sleeve of whoever came to the window, were anything but agreeable."

Whenever Petrea was deservedly reproved or admonished for these things, she fell out of the clouds, or rather out of her heaven, down to the earth, which seemed to her scarcely anything else than a heap of nettles and brambles, and very gladly indeed would she have bought

with ten years of her life, one year of the magic power of the "Magic Ring," together with beauty, magic charms, power, and such-like things, which she did not possess, except in her dreams.

Petrea's life was a cleft between an ideal and a real world, of both of which she knew nothing truly, and which on that account became amalgamated for the first time in her soul. Rivers of tears flowed into the separating gulf, while she now complained of circumstances, and now of her ownself, for being the cause of what she endured.

It was at this time that, partly at the wish of the parents, and partly also out of his own kind-heartedness, Jacobi began seriously to occupy himself with Petrea; and he occupied her mind in such a manner as strengthened and practised her thinking powers, whereby the fermentation in her feelings and imagination was in some measure abated. All this was indescribably beneficial to her, and it would have been still more so had not the teacher been too—but we will leave the secret to future years.

The Judge received one day a large letter out of Stockholm, which, after he had read, he silently laid before his wife. It came from the highest quarter, contained most honourable and flattering praise of the services of Judge Frank, of which the government had long been observant, and now offered him elevation to the highest regal court.

When Elise had finished the letter she looked up inquiringly to her husband, who stood beside her. "What think you of it, Ernst?" asked she, with a constrained and uneasy glance.

The Judge walked more quickly up and down the room, as was his custom when any thing excited him. "I cannot feel indifferent," said he; "I am affected by this mark of confidence in my sovereign. I have long expected this occurrence, but I feel, I see that I cannot leave my present sphere of operation. My activity is suited to it; I know that I am of service here, and the confidence of the Sheriff gives me unrestrained power to work according to my ability and views. It is possible that he, instead of me, may get the credit of the good which is done in the province; but, in God's name, let it be so! I know that what is good and beneficial is actually done, and that is enough; but there is a great deal which is only begun which must be completed, and a great deal, an infinite great deal remains yet to be done. I cannot leave a half-finished work—I cannot and I will not! One must complete one's work, else it is good for nothing! And I know that here I am—but I am talking only of myself. Tell me, Elise, what you wish; what you would like."

"Let us remain here!" said Elise, giving her hand to her husband, and seating herself beside him. "I know that you would have no pleasure in a higher rank, in a larger income, if you on that account must leave a sphere where you feel yourself in your place, and where you can work according to the desire of your own heart, and where you are surrounded by persons who esteem and love you! No; let us remain here!"

"But you, you, Elise," said he, "speak of yourself, not of me."

"Yes, you!" answered she, with the smile of a happy heart, "that is not so easy to do—for you see all that belongs to the one is so interwoven with what belongs to the other. But I will tell you something about myself. I looked

at myself this morning in the glass—no satirical looks, my love! and it seemed to me as if I appeared strong and healthy. I thought of you, thought how good and kind you were, and how, whilst I had walked by your side, I had been strengthened both in body and mind; how I must still love you more and more, and how we had become happier and happier together. I thought of your activity, so rich in blessing both for home and for the general good; thought on the children, how healthy and good they are, and how their characters have unfolded so happily under our hands. I thought of our new house which you have built so comfortable and convenient for us all, and just then the sun shone cheerfully into my little, beloved boudoir, and I felt myself so fortunate in my lot! I thanked God for it and for you! I would willingly live and die in this sphere—in this house. Let us then remain here."

"God bless you for these words, Elise!" said he. "But the children: the children! Our decision will influence their future; we must also hear what they have got to say; we must lay the matter before them: not that I fear their having, if they were aware of our mode of reasoning, any wish different to ours, but at all events they must have a voice in the business. Come, Elise! I shall have no rest till it is all talked over, and decided."

When the Judge laid the affair before the family council, it occasioned a great surprise; on which a general silence ensued, and attractive visions began to swarm before the eyes of the young people, not exactly of the highest Court of Judicature, but of the seat of the same—of the Capital. Louise looked almost like a Counselor of Justice herself. But when her father had made known his and his wife's feelings on the subject, he read in their tearful eyes gratitude for the confidence he had placed in them, and the most entire acquiescence with his will.

No one spoke, however, till "the little one"—the father had not said to her, "go out for a while, Gabriele dear;" "let her stop with us," he said on the contrary, "she is a prudent little girl!" No one spoke till Gabriele threw her arms about her mother's neck, and exclaimed, "Ah, don't let us go away from here—here we are so happy!"

This exclamation was echoed by all.

"Well, then, here we remain, in God's name!" said the Judge, rising up and extending his arms, with tears in his eyes, towards the beloved circle. "Here we remain, children! But this shall not prevent your seeing Stockholm, and enjoying its pleasures! I thank God, my children, that you are happy here; it makes me so too, I assure you!"

On this day, for the first time for long, Leonore dined with the family. Everybody rejoiced on that account; and as her countenance had a brighter and more kindly expression than common, everybody thought her pretty. Eva, who had directed and assisted her toilette, rejoiced over her from the bottom of her heart.

"Don't you see, Leonore," said she, pointing up to heaven, where light blue openings were visible between clouds, which for the greater part of the day had poured down rain, "don't you see it is clearing up, Leonore, and then we will go out together and gather flowers and fruit." And as she said this her blue eyes

beamed with kindness and the enjoyment of life.

"What, in all the world, are these doing here?" asked Henrik, as he saw his mother's shoes standing in the window, in the pale sunshine; "they ought to be warmed, I fancy, and the sun has no desire to come out and do his duty. No, in this case, I shall undertake to be sun!"

"That you are to me, my summer-child!" said the mother, smiling affectionately as she saw Henrik had placed her shoes under his waistcoat, to warm them on his breast.

"Cross elements, my dear Louise!" exclaimed Jacobi, "yet it will be very lovely weather! Should we not take a little walk? You come with us. You look most charming—but, in heaven's name, not in the Court-preacher!"

PART II.

CHAPTER I.

LEONORE TO EVA.

"AND are you coming home? Come really home soon, dear Eva? Ah! I am so happy, so joyful on that account, and yet a little anxious: but don't mind that; come, only come, and all will be right! When I can only look into your eyes, I feel that all will be clear. Your good eyes! Gabriele and I call them 'our blue ones.' How long it is that I have not seen you—two long years! I cannot conceive, dear Eva, how I have lived so long without seeing you; but then it is true that we have not been in reality separated. I have accompanied you into the great world; I have been with you to balls and concerts; I have enjoyed with you your pleasures and the homage which has been paid to you. Ah! what joy for me that I have learned to love you! Since then I have lived two-fold, and felt myself so rich in you! And now you are coming back, and then, shall we be as happy as before?"

"Forgive, forgive this note of interrogation! But sometimes a disquiet overcomes me. You speak so much of the great world, of joys, and enjoyments, which—it is not in home to afford you. And your grand new acquaintance—ah, Eva! let them be ever so agreeable and interesting, it cannot be that they love as we do, as I do! And then this Major R——! I am afraid of him, Eva. It appears to me the most natural thing in the world that he should love you, but—ah, Eva! it grieves me that you should feel such affection for him. My dear, good Eva, attach yourself not too closely to him before—but I distress you, and that I will not. Come, only come to us; we have so much to say to you, so much to hear from you!"

"I fancy you will find the house yet more agreeable than formerly; we have added many little decorations to it. You will again take breakfast with us—that comfortable meal, and my best beloved time; and tea with us—your favourite hour, in which we were assembled for a merry evening, and were often quite wild. This morning I took out your breakfast-cup, and kissed that part of the edge on which the gold was worn off.

"We will again read books together, and think about and talk about them together. We will again go out together and enjoy all the freshness and quiet of the woods. And would it not be a blessed thing to wander thus calmly through life, endeavouring to improve ourselves, and to make all those around us happier; to admire the works of God, and humbly to thank Him for all that he has given to us and others? Should we not then have lived and flourished enough on earth? Truly I know that a life quiet as this might not satisfy every one; neither can it accord with all seasons of life. Storms will come; even I have had my time of unrest, of suffering, and of combat. But, thank God! that is now past, and the sensibility which destroyed my peace is now become as a light to my path; it has extended my world; it has made me better: and now that I no longer covet to enjoy the greater and stronger pleasures of life, I learn now, each passing day, to prize yet higher the treasures which surround quiet every-day life. O, no one can be happy on earth till he has learned the worth of little things, and to attend to them! When once he has learned this, he may make each day not only happy, but find in it cause of thankfulness. But he must have peace—peace both within himself and without himself; for peace is the sun in which every dewdrop of life glitters!"

"Would that I could but call back peace into a heart which—but I must prepare you for a change; for a great vote in the house. You will not find Petrea here. You know the state of things which so much distressed me for some time. It would not do to let it go on any longer either for Louise or Jacobi's sake, or yet for her own, and therefore Petrea must go, otherwise they all would have become unhappy. She herself saw it; and as we had tidings of Jacobi's speedy arrival here, she opened her heart to her parents. It was noble and right of her, and they were as good and prudent as ever; and now our father is gone with her to his friend Bishop B. May God preserve her, and give her peace! I shed many tears over her; but I hope all may turn out well. Her lively heart has a fresh-flowing fountain of health in it; and certainly her residence in the country, which she likes so much, new circumstances, new interests—"

"I was interrupted: Jacobi is come! It is a good thing that Petrea is now whiling away her time in the shades of Furudal; good for her poor heart, and good too for the betrothed pair, who otherwise could not have ventured to have been happy in their presence. But now they are entirely so.

"Now, after six years' long waiting, sighing, and hoping, Jacobi sees himself approaching the goal of his wishes—marriage and a parsonage! And the person who helps him to all this, to say nothing of his own individual deserts, is his beloved patron the excellent Excellence D. Through his influence two important landed-proprietors in the parish of Great T. have been induced to give their votes to Jacobi, who, though yet young, has been proposed; and thus he will receive one of the largest and most beautiful livings in the bishoprick, and Louise will become a greatly honoured pastor's wife—'provost's wife' she herself says prophetically.

"The only but in this happiness is, that it will

remove Jacobi and Louise so far from us. Their highest wish had been to obtain the rural appointment near this city; and thus we might, in that case, have maintained our family unbroken, even though Louise had left her home; but—'but,' says our good, sensible 'eldest,' with a sigh, 'all things cannot be perfect here on earth.'

"The day of nomination falls early in the spring; and Jacobi, who must enter upon his office immediately after his appointment, wishes to celebrate his marriage at Whitsuntide, in order that he may conduct his young wife into his shepherd's hut along flower bestrewn-paths, and by the song of the lark. Mrs. Gunilla jestingly beseeches of him not to become too nomadic: however, this is certain, that no living being has more interest about cows and calves, sheep and poultry, than Louise.

"The future married couple are getting their whole household in order beforehand; and Gabriele heartily amuses herself with such fragments of their entertaining conversation as reach her ear, while they sit on the sofa in the library talking of love and economy. But it is not talking *alone* that they do, for Jacobi's heart is full of warm human love; and as to him, so has our father imparted to all his children somewhat of his love for the general good, although Gabriele maintains that her portion thereof is as yet very small.

"It gives me great pleasure to see the betrothed go out to make purchases, and then to see them return so cordially well pleased with all they have bought. Louise discovers something so unsurpassably excellent in every thing with which she furnishes herself, whether it be an earthen or a silver vessel. When I look at these two, like a pair of birds carrying together straws to their nest, and twittering over them, I cannot help thinking that it must be a greater piece of good fortune to come to the possession of a humbly supplied habitation which one has furnished oneself, than to that of a great and rich one for which other people have cared. One is, in the first place, so well acquainted with, so on thee-and-thou terms, with one's things; and certainly nobody in this world can be more so than Louise with hers.

"We are all of us now working most actively for the wedding, but still our father does not look with altogether friendly eyes on an occasion which will withdraw a daughter from his beloved circle. He would so gladly keep us all with him. Apropos! we have a scheme for him which will make him happy in his old age. You remember the great piece of building-land overgrown with bushes, which the people had not understanding enough either to build upon or to give up to us, this we intend—but we will talk about it mouth to mouth. Petrea has infected us all, even "our eldest," with her desire for great undertakings; and then—truly it is a joy to be able to labour for the happiness of those who have laboured for us so affectionately and unweariedly.

"Now something about friends and acquaintance.

"All friends and acquaintance ask much after you. Mr. Munter wrangles because you do not come, all the time he breakfasts with us (generally on Wednesday and Saturday mornings), and

while he abuses our rusks, out notwithstanding devours a great quantity of them. For some time he has appeared to me to have become more amiable than formerly; his temper is milder, his heart always was mild. He is the friend and physician of all the poor. A short time ago he bought a little villa, a mile distant from the city; it is to be the comfort of his age, and is to be called 'The Old Man's Rose'—does not that sound comfortable?

"Annette P. is very unhappy with her coarse sister-in-law. She does not complain; but look, complexion, nay, even her whole being, indicate the deepest discontent with life; we must attract her to us, and endeavour to make her happier.

"Here comes Gabriele, and insists upon it that I should leave some room for her scrawl. A bold request! But then who says no to her? Not I, and therefore I must make a short ending.

"If a certain Baron Rutger L. be introduced to you when you return, do not imagine that he is deranged, although he sometimes seems as if he were so. He is the son of one of my father's friends; and as he is to be educated by my father for a civil post, he is boarded in our family. He is a kind of '*diamant brute*,' and requires polishing in more senses than one; in the mean time I fancy his wild temper is in a fair way of being tamed. One word from our mother makes impression upon him; and he is actually more regardful of the ungracious demeanour of our little lady, than of the moral preaching of our eldest. He is just nineteen. Old Brigitta is quite afraid of him, and will hardly trust herself to pass him lest he should leap over her. Oh, how happy she, like every body else, will be to see you back again! she fears lest you should get married, and stop 'in the holé,' as she calls Stockholm.

"Henrik will remain with us over Christmas, but you must come and help to enliven him; he is not so joyous as formerly. I fancy that the misunderstanding between him and Sternhök distresses him. Ah! why would not these two understand one another! For the rest, many things are now at stake for Henrik; God grant that all may go well, both on his account and my mother's!

"We shall not see Petrea again till after Louise's marriage. When shall we all be again all together at home? Sarah! ah! it is now above four years since we heard any thing of her, and all inquiry and search after her has been in vain. Perhaps she lives no longer! I have wept many tears over her; oh! if she should return! I feel that we should be happier together than formerly; there was much that was good and noble in her, but she was misled—I hear my mother's light steps, and that predicts that she has something good for me—

"Ah yes! she has! she has a letter from you my Eldest. You cannot fix the day of your return, and that is very sad—but you come soon! You love Stockholm; so do I also; I could embrace Stockholm for that reason.

"I am now at the very edge of my paper. Gabriele has bespoken the other side. I leave you now, in order to write to *her* who left us with tears, but who, as I cordially hope, will return to us with smiles."

FROM GABRIELE.

In the Morning.

"I could not write last evening, and am now up before the sun in order to tell you that nothing can console me for Petrea's absence, excepting your return. We are all of us terribly longing after 'our rose.' I know very well who beside your own family longs for this same thing.

"I must tell you that a little friendship has been got up between Mr. Munter and me. All this came about in the fields, for he is never particularly polite within doors, whilst in a walk, the beautiful side of his character always comes out. Petrea and I have taken such long excursions with him, and then he was mild and lively; then he botanised with us, told of the natural families in the vegetable kingdom, and related the particular life and history of many plants. Do you know it is the most agreeable thing in the world to know something of all this; one feels oneself on such familiar terms with these vegetable families. Ah! how often when I feel thus am I made aware how indescribably rich and glorious life is and I fancy that every one must live happily on earth who has only eyes and sense awakened to all that is glorious therein, and then I can sing like a bird for pure life-enjoyment. In the mean time Mr. Munter and I cultivate flowers in the house quite enthusiastically, and intend at Christmas to make presents of both red-and-white lilacs; but, indeed, I have almost a mind to cry that the nose of my Petrea cannot smell them.

"But I must come to an end, for you must know that occasionally I have undertaken to have a watchful eye over the breakfast-table, and therefore I go now to look after it. Bergstrom has fortunately done all this, so that I have nothing now to do; next I must go and look after my moss-rose, and see whether a new bud has yet made its appearance: then I shall go and see after mamma; one glance must I give through the window to the leaves in the garden, which nod a farewell to me before they fall from the twigs; and to the sun also which now rises bright and beaming; must I send a glance—a beam from the sun of my eyes and out of the depth of my thankful heart; and therefore that I may be able, for the best well being of the community to attend to all these important matters, I must say to you, farewell! to you who are so dear to me."

CHAPTER XXVII.

PETREA TO LEONORE.

From the Inn in D——.

"It is evening, and my father is gone out in order to make arrangements for our to-morrow's voyage. I am alone: the mist rises thick without, before the dirty inn-windows; my eyes also are misty; my heart is heavy and full, I must converse with you.

"O Leonore! the bitter step has thus been taken—I am separated from my own family, from my own home; and not soon shall I see again their mild glances, or hear your consoling voice—and all this—because I have not deserved—because I have destroyed the peace of my

home! Yes, Leonore! in vain will you endeavour to excuse me, and reconcile me with myself! I know that I am criminal—that I have desired, that I have wished, at least, for a moment—oh, I would now press the hem of Louise's garment to my lips, and exclaim, 'Forgive, forgive! I have passed judgment on myself—I have banished myself; I fly—fly in order no more to disturb your happiness or his!'

"I was a cloud in their heaven; what should the cloud do there? May the wind disperse it! O Leonore, it is an indescribably bitter feeling for a heart which burns with gratitude to be able to do nothing more for the object of its love than to keep itself at a distance, to make itself into nothing! But rather that—rather a million times hide myself in the bosom of the earth, than give sorrow either to him or to her! Truly, if thereby I could win anything for them; if I could moulder to dust like a grain of corn, and then shoot forth for them into plentiful blessing—that would be sweet and precious, Leonore! People extol all those who are able to die for love, for honour, for religion, for high and noble ends, and wherefore? Because it is, indeed, a mercy from God to be able so to die—it is life in death!

"I know a life which is death—which, endured through long clinging years, would be a burden to itself, and a joy to no one. O how bitter! Wherefore must the craving after happiness, after enjoyment, burn like an eternal thirst in the human soul, if the assuaging fountain, Tantalus like—?

"Leonore, my eyes burn, my head aches, and my heart is wildly tempested! I am not good—I am not submissive—my soul is a chaos—a little earth on forehead and breast, that might be good for me.

On board the Steam-boat.

"Thanks, Leonore, thanks for your pillow; it has really been an ear-comfort for me.* Yesterday I thought that I was in the direct way to become ill. I shivered; I burned; my head ached fearfully: I felt as if torn to pieces. But when I laid my head upon your little pillow, when my ear rested upon the delicate cover which you had ornamented with such exquisite needlework, then it seemed to me as if your spirit whispered to me out of it; a repose came over me; all that was bad vanished so quickly, so wonderfully! I slept calmly; I was quite astonished when they woke me in the morning to feel that, bodily, I was quite well, and mentally like one cured. All this has been done by your pillow, Leonore.

"It is related in the Acts of the Apostles that they brought the sick and laid them in the way on which the holy men went, that at least their shadows might fall upon them, and make them sound. I have faith in the power of such a remedy; yes, the good, the holy, impart somewhat of their life, of their strength, to all that belong to them: I have found that to-night.

"We went on board. The 'Sea-Witch' thundered and flew over the sea. I knew that she conveyed me away from you all, and leaning over the bulwarks I wept. I felt then a pair of arms tenderly and gently surrounding me—they were my father's! He wrapped a warm

* Poor Petrea makes a little pun here. In Swedish, *öra*

cloak around me, and leaning on his breast, I raised my head. The morning was clear; white flame-like clouds chased by the morning wind flew across the deep blue; the waves beat foaming against the vessel; green meadows, autumnally beautiful parks extended themselves on either side of us; space opened itself. I stood with my face turned towards the wind and space—let the sea-spray wet my lips and my eyelids, a soft shudder passed through me, and I felt that life was beautiful. Yes, in the morning hour, filled with its beaming-light, in this pure fresh wind, I felt the evil demons of my soul retreat, and disperse themselves like mist and vapour. I drank in the morning winds; I opened my heart to life; I might also have opened my arms to them, and at the same time to all my beloved ones, that thus I might have expressed to them the quiet prediction of my heart, that love to them will heal me, will afford me strength some time or other to give them joy.

"The second day on board."

"I should like to know whether a deep heart-grief would resist the influence of a long voyage. There is something wonderfully strengthening, something renovating in this life—this voyaging, this fresh wind. It chases the dust from the eyes of the soul; one sees oneself and others more accurately, and gets removed from one's old self. One journeys in order to stand upon a new shore, and amid new connections. One begins, as it were, anew.

"We had a storm yesterday, and with the exception of my father, I was the only passenger who remained well, and on this account I could help the sufferers. It is true it was not without its discomforts; it is true that I reeled about sometimes with a glass of water, and sometimes with a glass of drops in the hand; but I saw many a laughable scene—many an odd trait of human nature. I laughed, made my own remarks, forgot myself, and became friendly with all mankind. Certainly it would be a very good thing for me to be maidservant on board a steamboat.

"Towards evening, the storm, as well within as without the vessel, abated itself. I sat solitary on deck till midnight. The waves still foamed around the agreeably rocking vessel; the wind whistled in the rigging; and the full moon, heralded by one bright little star, rose from the sea, and diffused her mild wondrous light over its dark expanse. It was infinitely glorious! Nameless thoughts and feelings arose in me, full of love and melancholy, and yet at the same time elevating and strengthening; a certain longing after that for which I knew no name. I desired I knew not what.

"But I fear and know that which I do not desire. I fear the quiet measured life into which I am about again to enter—conventionalities, forms, social life, all this cramps my soul together, and makes it inclined to excesses. Instead of sitting in select society, and drinking tea in 'high life,' would I rather roam about the world in Viking expeditions; rather eat locusts with John the Baptist in the wilderness, and go hither and thither in a garment of camel's hair;

and after all such apparel as this must be very convenient in comparison with our patchwork toilette. Manifold are the changing scenes of life, and how shall I find my way, and where shall I find my place in the magic circle of the world. Forgive me, Leonore, that I talk so much about myself. Thou good one, thou hast spoiled me in this respect.

"We reach Furdal to-day at noon.

Furdal.

"Here are we on land; I would that I were at sea! I come even now from the company-room, and in the company-room I always suffer shipwreck. An evil genius always makes me say or do something there unbecoming. This evening I entangled the reel of the Bishop's lady, and told a stupid anecdote about a relation of hers. I wished to be witty, and I succeeded badly, as I always do.

"They are very neat people here. The Bishop is a small, pale man, with something angelic in voice and expression, but—he will not have much time to bestow on me; he lives in his books and his official duties, and moreover, he is almost always in the city; and his lady, who remains here perpetually, has very delicate health; but I will wait upon her, and read aloud to her, and that will give me pleasure. I only hope she may endure me.

"Both husband and wife were amiable towards my father's daughter, but I very well believe that they did not find me very loveable. Intolerably hot, too, was their detestable company-room, and I was tanned with the wind, and as red as a peony. Such things as these are enough to make one a little desperate; and then it is depressing, everlastingly to displease exactly where one wishes most to please!

"I have unpacked the trunk which you all so carefully packed for me; and now new and newly repaired articles of clothing flew into my arms one after another. O sisters! it was you who have thus brought my toilette in order for the whole winter! How good you are! I recognised Louise's hand again. Oh, I must weep, my beloved ones!—my home!

Some days later.

"The pine-trees rustle cool and still. I have been out;—mountains, woods, solitude with nature—glorious!

"O Leonore, I will begin a new life; I will die to my ancient self, to vanity, to error, to self-love. Every flattering token of remembrance—notes, keepsakes—be they from man or woman, I have destroyed. I send you herewith a little sum of money, which I received for ornamental matters and some of my own manufactures, which I sold. Buy something with it which will give pleasure to Louise and Jacobi; but do not let them surmise. I earnestly beseech you, that it comes from Petrea. If I could only sell myself for a respectable price, and make them rich, then—

"I shall have a deal of time for myself here, and I know how I shall employ it. I will go out a great deal. I will wander through wood and field, in storm, snow, and every kind of weather, till I am, at least, bodily weary. Perhaps then it may be calmer in the soul! I desire no longer to be happy. What does it mat-

gott means a pillow, and drongott what is good for the ear; but we cannot transfer this into English.

ter if one is not happy, if one is only pure and good! Were the probation-day of life only not so long! Leonore, my good angel, pray for me!

"May all be happy!

"Greet all tenderly from your

"PETREA."

"P.S.—My nose makes its compliments to Gabriele, and goes in the accompanying picture to pay her a visit. She must not imagine that I am cast down. I send also a little ballad or romance; the wood sung it to me last evening, and every harmonious sound which life in my soul sings, must go home. O how I love you all!"

CHAPTER III.

A CONVERSATION.

JACOB had left. October was come, with its storms and its long twilight, which is so dark and heavy for all such as have it not cheered by kindly glances and bright thoughts.

One evening as Henrik came down to tea, he was observed to look uncommonly pale, and in answer to the inquiry of his sisters as to the cause, he replied that he had headache, and added half in jest, half in earnest, that it would be very beautiful to be once freed from this heavy body—it was so sadly in one's way!

"How you talk!" said Louise, "at all events it is right to treat it well, and rationally; not to go sitting up all night, and studying, so that one has headache all day!"

"Thank your majesty, most submissively, for the moral," said Henrik; "but if my body will not serve my soul, but will subject it, I have a very great desire to contend with it and to quarrel with it."

"The butterfly becomes matured in the chrysalis," said Gabriele smiling sweetly, while she strewed rose-leaves upon some chrysalises which were to sleep through the winter on her flower-stand.

"Ah, yes," replied Henrik; "but how heavily does not the shell press down upon the wings of the butterfly. The earthly chrysalis weighs upon me! What would not the soul accomplish! How could it not live and enjoy, were it not for this! In certain bright moments, what do we not feel and think! what brilliancy in conception! what god-like warmth of feeling in the heart! One could press the whole world to one's bosom at such a time, seeing with a glance through all, and penetrating all as with fire! O, there is, then, an abundance, a clearness! Yes, if our Lord himself came to me at such a moment, I should reach forth my hand to him and say, 'Good day, brother!'"

"Dear Henrik," said Louise, somewhat angrily, "now I think you do not rightly know what you say."

"Yes," continued he, without appearing to regard the interruption, "so can one feel, but only for a moment; in the next, the chrysalis closes heavily again its earthly dust-mantle around our being, and we are stupified and sleep, and sink deep below that which we so lately were. Then one sees in books nothing but printed words, and in one's soul one finds neither feeling nor thought, and towards man, for whom, so shortly before, the very heart seemed

to burn, one feels one's self stiff and disinclined. Ah, it were enough to make one fall into despair!"

"It would be far better," said Louise, "that such people went to sleep, and then they would get rid of headache and heaviness."

"But," said Henrik, smiling, "that is a sorrowful remedy according to my notions. It is horrible to require so much sleep. How can any one who is a seven-sleeper become great! 'Les hommes puissans veulent et veulent,' says Balzac with reason, and because my miserable heavy nature requires so much sleep, so certainly shall I never turn out great in any way. Besides, this entrancement, this glorification produces such wakeful moments in the soul, that one feels poor and stripped when they are extinguished. Ah! I can very well comprehend how so many make use of external excitement to recall or to prolong them, and that they endeavour through the fire of wine to wake again the fire of the soul."

"Then," said Louise, "you comprehend something which is very bad and irrational. They are precisely such excitements as these that we have to thank for their being so many miserable men, and so many drunkards in Sweden that one can scarcely venture to go out in the streets for them!"

"I do not defend it, dear Louise," said Henrik, gently smiling at the zeal of his sister, "but I can understand it, and in certain cases I can excuse it. Life is often felt to be so heavy, and the moments of inspiration give a fulness to existence; they are like lightning flashes out of the eternal life!"

"And so they certainly are," said Leonore, who had listened attentively to her brother, and whose mild eyes had become moist by his words; "and life will certainly," continued she, "feel thus clear, thus full, when we shall have become ever entirely freed from the chrysalis; not from the bonds of the body only, but of the soul also; and perhaps these moments are given to us here on earth to allure us up to the Father's house, and to let us feel its air."

"A beautiful thought, Leonore," said her brother. "Thus these gleams of light are truly revelations of our inward-actual, here-yet-enslaved life. Good God! how glorious that—but ah! the long, long moments of darkness, what are they!"

"Trials of patience, times of preparation," replied Leonore, tenderly smiling. "Besides, the bright moments come again and gladden us with their light, and that so much the more frequently, the farther one advances in perfection. But one must, at the same time, learn to have patience with one's self, Henrik, and here in this life to wait for one's self."

"You have spoken a true word, sister, and I must kiss your hand for it," said Henrik. "Ah, yes, if—"

"Be now a little less sensible and æsthetic," exclaimed 'our eldest,' "and come here and drink a cup of tea. See here, Henrik, a cup of strong warm tea will do your head good; but this evening and to-morrow morning you must take a table-spoonful of my elixir."

"From that defend us all, ye good—*Vi ringrazia carissima sorella!*" said Henrik. "But, but charming Gabriele! a drop of port wine in

the tea would make it more powerful, without turning me into one of those miserable beings of whom Louise is so afraid. Thanks, sister dear. *Fermes les yeux, O Mahomet!*" and with an obeisance before Louise, Henrik conveyed the cup to his lips.

Later in the evening Henrik stood in one of the windows looking out into the moonlight. Leonore went up to him and looked into his face with that mild, humbly questioning glance to which the heart so willingly opened itself, and which was peculiar to her.

"You are so pale, Henrik," said she, disquieted.

"It is extraordinary," said he, half laughing at himself, do you see, Leonore, how the tops of the fir-trees there in the church-yard lift themselves and beckon! I cannot conceive why, but this nodding and beckoning distresses me wonderfully; I feel it in my very heart."

"That comes naturally enough, Henrik," returned she, "because you are not well. Shall we not go out a little? it is such a lovely moon-shine. The fresh air will perhaps do you good."

"Will you go with me, Leonore?" said he. "Yes, that is a good idea."

Gabriele found herself rather poorly, and called her brother and sister Somojedes, Laplanders, Esquimaux, and such like, who would go wandering about in the middle of a winter's night. Nevertheless, these two went forth jestingly and merrily arm in arm.

"Is it not too windy for you?" asked Henrik, while he endeavoured carefully to shield his sister from the wind.

"The wind is not cold," replied Leonore, "and it is particularly charming to me to walk by your side, while it roars around us, and while the snow-flakes dance about in the moon-shine like little Kobolds."

"Nay, you feel then like me!" said Henrik, "With you, sisters, I am ever calm and happy; but I don't know how it is, but now for sometime other people often plague and irritate me—"

"Ah, Henrik," remarked Leonore, "is not that someway your own fault?"

"Are you thinking of Sternhok, Leonore?" asked he.

"Yes."

"So am I," continued he, "and perhaps you are right; yes, I will willingly concede that I have often been unjust towards him, and unreasonably violent, but he has excited me to it. Why has he made me so often oppressively feel his superiority—so often taken away from me my own joy in my own endeavours, and almost always treated me with coldness and depreciation."

Leonore made no answer; the moonlight lit a quiet tear in her eye, and Henrik continued with increasing violence—

"I could have loved him so much! He had, through the originality of his character, his strength, and his whole individuality, a great influence, a great power over me; but he has misused it; he has treated me severely, precisely in the instances in which I approached him nearest. He has flung from him the devotion which I cherished for him. I will tell you the whole truth, Leonore, and how this has happened between us. You know that in the University, about three years ago, a sort of literary

society of young men gathered themselves about me. Perhaps they esteemed my literary talents too highly, and might mislead me,—I could almost believe so myself, but I was the favourite in the day in the circle in which my life moved; perhaps on that account I became presumptuous; perhaps a tone of pretension betrayed itself in me, and a false, one-sided direction was visible in the poems which I then published; nevertheless, these poems made some little noise in the world. Shortly, however, after their appearance, a criticism on them came out, which made a yet greater noise, on account of its power, its severity, and also its satirical wit. Its acrimony spared neither my worth nor my character as a poet, and it produced almost universally a re-action against me. It appeared to me severe and one-sided; and even now, at this moment, it appears to me not otherwise, although I can now see its justice much better than at the time,

"The anonymous author of the critique upon me was Sternhok, and he did not in the slightest deny it. He considered it as being much less directed against me personally, than against the increasing influence of the party of which I was a sort of chief. Even before this I had begun to withdraw myself from his power, which I always felt to be oppressive; and this new blow did not, by any means, tend to reunite us. His severe criticism had made me observant of my faults; but yet I do not know whether it would have produced any other effect than pain, had I not at this time returned home to you; and at home, through the beneficial influence of my own family, a new strength and a purer direction had been aroused in me. That was the time in which my father, with indescribable goodness, and in complot with you all, sold the half of his library to furnish me with the means of foreign travel. Yes, you have called forth a new being in me; and all my poems, and all my writings, are now designed to prove to you that I am not unworthy of you. Ah, yes! I love you warmly and deeply—but it is all over with Sternhok; the love which I cherished for him has changed itself into bitterness."

"Ah, Henrik, Henrik, do not let it be so!" said Leonore. "Sternhok is indeed a noble, a good man, even if, at the same time, too severe. But really he loves you as well as we, but you two will not understand one another; and Henrik, the last time you were really unjust to him—you seemed as if you could hardly bear him."

"I hardly can, Leonore," said he. "It is a feeling stronger than myself. I don't know what evil spirit it is which now, for some time, has set itself firmly in my heart; but there it is steadfastly rooted; and if I am aware only of Sternhok's presence, it is as if a sharp sword passed through me—before him my heart contracts itself; and if he only touch me, I feel as if burning lead went through my veins."

"Henrik! dearest Henrik!" exclaimed Leonore with pain, "it is really terrible! Ah! make only the attempt with yourself; conquer your feelings, and extend the hand of reconciliation to him."

"It is too late for that, Leonore," said Henrik. "Yes, if it were necessary for him, it would be easy; but what does he trouble himself about me? He never loved me, and never

esteemed either my efforts or my ability. And perhaps it may be with some justice that he does not think so very highly of my talents. What have I done? And sometimes it seems to me, even in the future, that I never shall do any thing great; that my powers are limited, and that my spring-time is past. Sternhok's, on the contrary, is yet to come; he belongs to that class which mounts slowly, but on that account all the more steadily. I see now, much better than I did formerly, how far he stands beyond me, and how much higher he will rise—and this knowledge is martyrdom to me."

"But wherefore," pleaded Leonore, "these dark thoughts and feelings, dear Henrik, when your future appears fuller of hope than ever before? Your beautiful poetry; your prize essay, which is certain to bring you honour; the prospect of an advantageous post, a sphere of action which will be dear to you—all this, which in a few months will so animate your heart—why has it at this time so lost its power over you?"

"I cannot tell," replied he; "but for some time now I have been, and am much changed; I have no faith in my good fortune; it seems to me as if all my beautiful hopes will vanish like a dream."

"And even if it were so," said Leonore questioning, with humility and tenderness, "could you not find happiness and peace at home; in the occupation of your beloved studies; in the life with us, who love you solely, and for your own sake?"

Henrik pressed his sister's arm to his side, but answered nothing; and a violent passing gust of wind compelled him to stand still for a moment.

"Horrible weather!" said he, wrapping his cloak round his sister at the same time.

"But this is your favourite weather," remarked she jestingly.

"Was, you should say," returned he; "now I do not like it, perhaps because it produces a feeling in me which distresses me." With these words he took his sister's hand and laid it on his heart. His heart beat wildly and strongly; its beating was almost audible.

"Heavens!" exclaimed Leonore alarmed, "Henrik, what is this!—is it often thus?"

"Only occasionally;—I have had it now for some time," replied he; "but don't be uneasy on this account; and, above all things, say nothing to my mother or Gabriele about it. I have spoken with Munter on the subject; he has prescribed for me, and does not think it of much consequence. To-day I have had it without intermission, and perhaps I am from that cause somewhat hypochondriacal. Forgive me, dear Leonore, that I have teased you about it. I am much better and livelier now; this little walk has done me good,—if you only don't get cold, Leonore, or you would certainly be punished, or at all events be threatened with Louise's elixir. But does there not drive a travelling carriage towards our door, exactly as if it would stop there? Can it be Eva? The carriage stops—it is certainly Eva!"

"Eva! Eva!" exclaimed Leonore, with cordial delight; and both brother and sister ran so quickly to the gate that she was received into their arms as she dismounted from the carriage.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

EVA.

AMONG the agreeable circumstances which occur in a happy home, may certainly be reckoned the return to its bosom of one of its beloved members. So returns the bee to the safe hive with her harvest of honey, after her flight abroad over the meadows of the earth. How much is there not mutually to relate, to hear, to see, and to enjoy! Every cloud in the heaven of home vanishes then, all is sunshine and joy; and it must be bad indeed, if they do not find one another lovelier and improved, since every thing goes on right here, every advancing foot-step in life must tend in a certain manner to improvement.

Bright, indeed, did Eva's return make the hours of sunshine in the Frank family! The mutual love which demonstrated itself in embraces, smiles, tears, laughter, sweet words of greeting, and a thousand tokens of joy and tenderness, made the first hours vanish in a lively intoxication, and then, when all had become quieter and they looked nearer about them, all looks and thoughts gathered themselves still about Eva with rapture; her beauty seemed now in its full bloom, and a captivating life seemed to prevail in her looks, in her behaviour, in her every motion, which hitherto had not been seen. Her dress of the most modern fashion, a certain development and style about her, a bewitching ease of manner, all evinced the elegant circles of the capital, and exerted their magic over her friends and charmed them all, but especially Gabriele, who followed her beautiful sister with beaming looks.

Bergström gave way to his feelings in the kitchen and exclaimed, "Mamselle Eva is quite divine!" Never had the blond Ulla so entirely agreed with him before.

Leonore was the only one who regarded Eva with a tender, yet at the same time troubled eye. She saw a something worldly in Eva's exterior demeanour, which was a prelude to her that a great and not happy change had taken place in her beloved sister. Nor was it long before Leonore's foreboding proved itself to be right. Eva had not been many hours in the house before it was plainly visible that domestic affairs had but little interest for her, and that parents and family and friends were not to her all that they had been before.

Eva's soul was entirely occupied by one object, which laid claim to all her thoughts and feelings, and this was Major R—. His handsome person, his brilliant talents; his amiability, his love; the parties in which she had met him, the balls in which she had danced with him; the occasions on which they had played parts together—in short, all the romantic unfoldings of their connexion, were the pictures which now alone lived in her heart, and danced around her fancy, now heated by worldly happiness.

The grave expression of her father's countenance, as he heard her first mention the Major, prevented her during this first evening from repeating his name.

But when afterwards she was alone with her sisters, when the sweet hour of talk came, which between dear friends, on such occasions, genea-

ally extends itself from night till morning, Eva gave free course to all with which her soul was filled, and related to her sisters at large her romance of the last year, in which several rival lovers figured, but of which Major R—— was the hero. Nor was it without self-satisfaction that Eva represented herself as the worshipped and conquering heroine amid a crowd of rival ladies. Her soul was so occupied by all these circumstances; her mind was so excited, that she did not observe the embarrassment of her sisters during her relation; she saw neither their disquiet, their constrained smiles, nor their occasionally depressed looks.

Nor was it till when, with eyes beaming with joy, she confided to them that Major R—— would soon come to the city, where he had relatives; that he would spend the Christmas with them, and then ask her hand from her parents, that the veil fell from her eyes. Louise expressed herself strongly against Major R——, wondered at her sister, and lamented that she could endure such a man; it was not, she said, what she had expected from her. Eva, very much wounded, defended the Major with warmth, and talked of intolerance and prejudice. In consequence of this, Louise's indignation was increased; Gabriele began to weep, and Louise bore her company; she seemed to look upon Eva as on one lost. Leonore was calmer; she spoke not one word which could wound her sister, but sighed deeply, and looked with quiet grief upon the beloved but misguided sister; and then seeing what a tragical turn the conversation was taking, said, with all that expression of calm sincerity so peculiarly her own:

"Do not let us this evening speak farther on this subject; do not let us disturb our joy. We have now Eva with us at home, and shall have time enough to talk and to think—and then all will be cleared up. Is it not quite for the best that we sleep on this affair? Eva must be weary after her journey, and 'our blue-eyed one' must not weep on this first evening."

Leonore's advice was taken, and with a mutual 'forgive,' Louise, Eva, and Gabriele embrace and separate for the night. Leonore was happy to be alone with Eva, and listened undisturbedly through the whole night to her relations. The good Leonore!

Major Victor R. was universally known as one of those who make sport with female hearts, and Judge Frank regarded sport of this kind with a severity very uncommon among his sex, especially where, as was the case in this instance, selfishness, and not thoughtlessness, led to it. The Major, ten years before this time, had married a young and rich girl connected with the Judge's family; and the only fault of the young wife, then sixteen, had been that of loving her husband too tenderly—nay, even in adoring one who repaid her love with relentless severity and faithlessness, under which the poor Amelia drooped, and, in the second year of her marriage, died; but not without having bequeathed to the unworthy husband all the property over which she had any control.

These were the very means by which R. now was enabled to pursue his brilliant and reckless career. He had been several times betrothed, but had broken off the affair again without the smallest regard to the reputation or to the feel-

ings of the girl, upon whom, by this means, he had cast a stain—nay, indeed, he secretly regarded it as an honour to himself to make such victims, and to cause hearts to bleed for him—that cooled the burning thirst of his self-love.

The world did justice to his agreeable and splendid talents; but the noble of his own sex, as well as of the other, esteemed him but very lightly, inasmuch as they considered him a person without true worth. The thoughts of a union between this man and his beloved daughter occasioned a storm in the bosom of the Judge.

Such was the information regarding the man whom she loved that met Eva on her return home. Everybody was unanimously against him. What Eva spoke in his excuse produced no effect; what she said of his true and deep devotion to her, evidently nobody credited; and over her own love, which had made the world so beautiful, which had produced the most delicious feelings in her breast, and had opened to her a heaven of happiness, people mourned and wept, and regarded as a misfortune. Wounded to the inmost of her soul, Eva drew herself back, as it were, from her own family, and accused them to herself of selfishness and unreasonableness. Louise, perhaps, deserved somewhat of this reproach; but Leonore was pure, pure as the angel of heaven; still Leonore mourned over Eva's love, and on that account Eva closed her heart against her also.

The variance, which in consequence of all this existed between Eva and her family, became only yet greater when Major R. arrived, shortly after her, at the city. He was a tall handsome man, of perhaps five-and-thirty; of a haughty, but somewhat trifling exterior; his countenance was gay and blooming, and his look clear and bold. Great practice in the world, and an inimitable ease and confidence, gave to his demeanour and conversation that irresistible power which these qualities exercise so greatly in society.

On his visit to the Franks, the Judge and he exchanged some glances, in which both read that neither could endure the other. The Major, however, let nothing of all this be seen, was perfectly candid and gay; and while he directed his conversation especially to Elise, spoke scarcely one word to Eva, though he looked much at her. After the first stiff salutation, the Judge went again into his study, for the very appearance of this man was painful to him. Leonore was polite, nay, almost friendly to him, for she would willingly have loved one whom Eva loved. Assessor Munter was present during this visit; but when he had seen, for a few minutes, the glances which the Major cast upon Eva, and their magic influence over her, and had observed and had read her whole heart in a timid glance which she raised to her beloved, he withdrew silently and hastily.

The Major came but seldom to the house, for the eye of the Judge appeared to have the power of keeping him at a distance; on the contrary, he managed it so that he saw her almost daily out of the house. He met her when she went out, and accompanied her home from church. Invitations came; sledding-parties and balls were arranged; and Eva, who formerly was so well pleased with home, who had often given up

The pleasures of the world for the domestic evening circle, Eva appeared to find nothing now pleasing at home, appeared only to be able to live in those circles and those pleasures in which Major R. shone, and where she could see herself distinguished by him. Precisely therefore on account of these rencontres of the two, the family went as little as possible into society. Still, notwithstanding all this, Eva's wishes upon the whole were favoured. Leonora accompanied her faithfully wherever she wished. The Judge was gloomy and disturbed in temper; the mother was mild and accommodating; and as to Eva, she was in a high degree sensitive; whilst whatever concerned her love, or seemed to oppose her wishes in the slightest degree, brought her to tears and hysterical sobs, and her friends became ever more and more aware how violent and exclusive her love was to Major R. The mere glimpse of him, the sound of his steps, the tone of his voice, shook her whole frame. All earlier affectionate relationships had lost their power over her heart.

It not unfrequently happens that people, whether it arises from physical or moral causes, become wonderfully unlike themselves. Irritability, violence, indiscretion, and unkindness, suddenly reveal themselves in a hitherto gentle and amiable character, and as if by a magic-stroke, a beautiful form has been transformed into a witch. It requires a great deal, under such circumstances, to keep friends warm and unchanged. A great demand of goodness, a great demand of clearness of vision, is made from any one when, under these circumstances, he is required to remain true in the same love, to persevere in the same faith, to wait patiently for the time when the magic shall lose its power, when the changed one shall come back again; and yet he, all the time, be able only to present himself by quiet prayers, mild looks, and affectionate care! I say *great purity of vision*, because the true friend never loses sight of the heavenly image of his friend; but sees it through every veil of casualty, even when it is concealed from all, nay even from the faulty one's self! He has faith in it; he loves it; he lives for it, and says, "Wait! have patience! it will go over, and then he (or she) comes back again!" And whoever has such a friend, comes back indeed!

So stood the quiet, affectionate Leonora, on the side of her altered sister.

All this time Henrik was beneficial to his whole family, and appeared to have regained all his former amiable animation, in order therewith to scare every disturbing sensation from the bosom of home. He accompanied his family, more than he had ever done before, into society, and had alway a watchful eye on his sister and the Major.

Before long the Major declared himself, and asked for Eva's hand. Her parents had prepared themselves for this event, and had decided on their line of conduct. They intended not to make their child unhappy by a decided negative to the wishes of her heart; but they had determined to demand a year of trial both from her and her lover, during which time they should have no intercourse with each other, should exchange no letters, and should consider themselves as free from every mutual obligation; and that then again after this interval of time, if they

two, the Major and Eva, still wished it, the question of their union might again be brought forward. This middle path had been proposed by Elise, who, through a progressively inward, and more perfect fulfilment of duties, had acquired an ever-increasing power over her husband, and thus induced him to accede to it, at the same time that she endeavoured to infuse into him the hope which she herself cherished, namely, either that Eva, during the time of probation, would discover the unworthiness of the Major, and won over by the wishes and the tenderness of her family, would conquer her love, or on the other hand, that the Major, ennobled by love and constant to her, would become worthy of her. It was one of the favourite axioms of the Judge, that every man had the power of improving himself, and he willingly conceded that for this end there existed no more powerful means than a virtuous love.

The Judge now talked energetically yet tenderly with his daughter; explaining clearly to her the terms of this connexion, without concealing from her how bitter to him had been, and still was, the thought of this union, and appealed to her own sense and reason whether too much had been required in this prescribed time of trial.

Eva shed many tears; but deeply affected by the goodness of her parents, consented to their wishes, and promised, though not without pain, to fulfil them. The Judge wrote to the Major, who had made his declaration by letter, a candid and noble, but by no means sugared, answer; wherein he required from him, as a man of honour, that he should by no means whatever induce Eva to swerve from the promises which she had made to her parents, and by this means disturb her hitherto so happy connexion with her own family. This letter, which the father allowed his daughter to read, and which occasioned her fresh tears, whilst she in vain endeavoured to persuade him to remove expressions which she considered too severe, but which he, on the contrary, considered too mild, was dispatched the same day, and all was again quieter.

Probably Eva would strictly have adhered to the wishes of her parents, which they endeavoured to make pleasant to her by much kindness, had not a letter from the Major been conveyed to her on the next evening, which quite excited and unhinged her again. He complained violently therein of her father's unreasonableness, injustice, and tyranny; and spoke, in the most passionate terms, of his love, of his unbounded sufferings, and of his despair. The consequence of this letter was, that Eva was ill—but more so, however, in mind than body—and that she demanded to have an interview with Assessor Munter.

The friend and physician of the house came immediately to her.

"Do you love me?" was Eva's first question when they were alone.

"Do I love you, Eva?" answered he, and looking at her with an expression of eye which must have moved any heart to tenderness that had been otherwise occupied than hers was.

"If you love me, if you desire that I should not be really ill," continued Eva, speaking with quickness and great warmth, "you must convey this letter to Major R., and bring his answer back

into my hands. My father is set against him, everybody is set against him; nobody knows him as well as I do! I am in a state of mind which will drive me to despair, if you have not compassion on me! But you must be my friend in secret.—You will not! If you love me you must take this letter and —

"Desire all things from me, Eva," interrupted he, "but not this! and precisely because you are so dear to me. This man in fact is not worthy of you; he does not deserve —"

"Not a word about him!" interrupted Eva, with warmth: "I know him better than you all—I alone know him; but you all are his enemies, and enemies to my happiness. Once again I pray you—pray you with tears! Is it then so much that I desire from you? My benefactor, my friend, will you not grant this prayer of your Eva?"

"Let me speak with your father," said he.

"On this subject! No, no! impossible!" exclaimed she.

"Then, Eva, I must refuse your prayer. It gives me more pain than I can express to refuse you anything in this world; but I will not stain my hand in this affair. I will not be a means of your unhappiness. Farewell!"

"Stop," cried Eva, "and hear me! What is it that you fear for me?"

"Everything from a man of R.'s character."

"You mistake him, and you mistake me," returned she.

"I know him, and I know you," said he, "and on that account I would rather go into fire than convey letters between him and you. This is my last word."

"You will not!" exclaimed she; "then you love me not, and I have not a friend in this world!"

"Eva, Eva, do not say so! you sin against yourself. You know not—ask everything from me—ask my life—ah, through you, life has already lost its worth for me!—ask —"

"Empty words!" interrupted Eva, and turned impatiently away. "I desire nothing more from you, Mr. Munter! Pardon me that I have given you so much trouble!"

Munter looked at her for some moments in silence, laid his hand hastily on his heart as if he had a pain there, and went out more bowed than commonly.

Not long after this, an unexpected ray of light gladdened the painful condition of affairs between Eva and her family. She was calmer. The Major removed from the city into the country, to pass the Christmas with a relation of his there; and on the same day Eva came down into the library at the customary hour of tea, after she had passed several days in her own room. Every one received her with joy. Her father went towards her with open arms, called her sweet names, placed her on the sofa by her mother, and took her tea to her himself: a lover could not have been more tender or more attentive to her. One might see that Eva was not different to these marks of affection, and that yet she did not receive them altogether with joy. A burning red alternated with paleness on her cheek, and at times it seemed that a tear, a repentant tear filled her eyes.

From this time, however, the old state of feeling, and the old quiet, returned in part to the

bosom of the family. Nobody named the Major; and as, when spring-time comes, the grass grows and the leaves burst forth, although the heaven is yet dark, and many a northern blast yet lingers in the air—so did affectionate feelings and joyful hours spring up again in the family of the Franks, from the spontaneous vernal spirit which reigned there.

You might have seen the mother there, like the heart of the family, taking part in all that went forward, making every one so cheerful and comfortable, as she moved about here and there, so rich in grace and joy and consolation! Wherever she came, there came with her a something pleasant or animating, either in word or deed; and yet all this time she was very far from being herself calm. Care for her daughter was accompanied by anxiety on account of Henrik's prospects and happiness. She understood, better than any one else, his feelings, his wishes, and his thoughts; and on this account glances of friendly understanding were often exchanged between them, and from this cause also was it that on those days when the post came in from Stockholm, she became paler and paler the nearer post-time came—for it perhaps might bring with it important news for Henrik.

"My dear Elise," said the Judge, jesting affectionately, "to what purpose is all this unequity, this incomprehensible anxiety! I grant that it would be a happiness to us all, and a prize of good luck, if Henrik could obtain the solicited situation—but if he did not get it—what then! he can get another in a little while. And his poem—suppose it should now and never more be regarded as a masterpiece, and should not obtain the prize—now, in heaven's name! what does it matter! He would perhaps, from the very circumstance of his having less fortune as a poet, be only the more practical man, and I confess that would not mortify me. And I shall wish the poem to the place where pepper grows if you are to become pale and nervous on its account! Promise me now next post-day to be reasonable, and not to look like the waning moon, else I promise you that I shall be downright angry, and will keep the whole post-bag to myself!"

To his children the father spoke thus: "Have you really neither genius or spirit of invention enough to divert and occupy your mother on the unfortunate post-day! Henrik, it depends upon you whether she be calm or not; and if you do not convince her that, let your luck in the world be whatever it may, you can bear it like a man, I must tell you that you have not deserved all the tenderness which she has shown you!"

Henrik coloured deeply, and the Judge continued, "and you, Gabriele! I shall never call you my clever girl again, if you do not make a riddle against the next post-day which shall so occupy your mother that she shall forget all the rest!"

The following post-day was an exceedingly merry one. Never before had more interesting topics of conversation been brought forward by Henrik; never before had the mother been so completely seduced into the discussions of the young people. At the very moment when the post-hour arrived, she was deeply busied in solving a riddle, which Henrik and Gabriele endeavoured to make only the more intricate by their fun and jokes, whilst they were pretending to assist her in the discovery.

The riddle ran as follows :

Raging war and tumult
Am I never nigh ;
And from rain and tempest,
To far woods I fly.
In cold, worldly bosoms
My deep grave is made,
And from conflagration
Death has me affrayed.
No one e'er can find me
In the dungeon glooms ;
I have no abiding,
Save where freedom blooms.
My morning sun ariseth,
Light o'er mind to fling ;
O'er love's throbbing bosom
Rests my downy wing !
Like our Lord in heaven,
I am ever there ;
And like him of children
Have I daily care.
What though I may sever
From thee now and then,
I forget thee never—
I come back again !
In the morning's brightness,
Dear one, if thou miss me,
With the sunset's crimson
Come I back and kiss thee !

This riddle, which it must be confessed was by no means one of Gabriele's best, gave rise to a fund of amusement, and occasioned the maddest propositions on Henrik's part. The mother, however, did not allow herself to be misled ; but examined, whilst she endeavoured to overpower the voices of her joking children,

"The riddle is—"

What the riddle was, the reader may see by the title of our next chapter.

CHAPTER XXIX.

HAPPINESS.

"HAPPINESS!" repeated the Judge, as he entered the room at the same moment, with letters and newspapers in his hand.

"I fancy you have been busying yourselves here with prophesyings," said he: "Gabriele, my child, you shall have your reward for it—read this aloud to your mother!" laying a newspaper before her.

Gabriele began to read,—but threw the paper hastily down, gave a spring for joy, clapped her hands and exclaimed,

"Henrik's poetry has won the highest prize!"

"And here, Henrik," said the father, "are letters—you are nominated to—" The voice of the Judge was drowned in the general outbreak of joy. Henrik lay in the arms of his mother, surrounded by his sisters, who, amid all their jubilation, had tearful eyes.

The Judge walked up and down the room with long strides; at length he paused before the happy group, and exclaimed,

"Nay, only see! let me also have a little bit! Elise—my thanks to thee that thou hast given him to me—and thou, boy, come here—I must tell thee—" but not one word could he tell him.

The father, speechless from inward emotion, embraced his son, and returned in the same manner the affectionate demonstration of his daughters.

Many private letters from Stockholm contained flattering words and joyful congratulations to the young poet. All Henrik's friends seemed to accord in one song of triumph.

There was almost too much happiness for one time.

During the first moment of this news the joy was calm and mingled with emotion; afterward, however, it was lively, and shot forth like rockets in a thousand directions. Everything was in motion to celebrate the day and its hero; and while the father of the family set about to mix a bowl—for he would that the whole house should drink Henrik's health—the others laid plans for a journey to Stockholm. The whole family must be witnesses of Henrik's receiving the great gold medal—they must be present on the day of his triumph. Eva recovered almost her entire liveliness as she described a similar festival which she had witnessed in the Swedish Academy.

Henrik talked a deal about Stockholm; he longed to be able to show his mother and sisters the beautiful capital. How they would be delighted with the gallery of mineralogy—how they would be charmed with the theatres! how they would see and hear the lovely Demoiselle Hogquist and the captivating Jenny Lind!—and then the castle!—the promenades—the prospects—the churches—the beautiful statues in the public places—Henrik would have been almost ready to have overthrown some of them—Oh, there was so much that was beautiful and delightful to see in Stockholm!

The mother smiled in joy over—the occasion of the journey to Scotland; the father said "yes" to everything; the countenances of the young people beamed forth happiness; the bowl was fragrant with good luck.

The young Baron L., who liked Henrik extremely, and who liked still more every lively excitement to every uproar, was possessed by a regular phrenzy to celebrate the day. He waltzed with everybody;—Louise might not sit still; "the little lady" must allow herself to be twirled about; but the truth was that in her joy she was about as wild for dancing as he was himself—the very Judge himself must waltz with him; and at last he waltzed with chairs and tables, whilst the fire of the punch was not very much calculated to abate his vivacious spirits.

It was very hard for the Judge that he was compelled on this very day to leave home, but pressing business obliged him to do so. He must make a journey that same evening, which would detain him from home three or four days, and although he left his family in the full bloom of their joy and prosperity, the short separation appeared to him more painful than common.

After he had taken his leave he returned—a circumstance very unusual with him—to the room again; embraced his wife yet a second time, flourished about with his daughters in his wolf-skin cloak as if out of liveliness, and then went out hastily, giving to the young Baron, who, in his wild joy had fallen upon his wolf's-skin like a dog, a tolerably heavy cuff. A few minutes afterwards, as he cast from his sledge a glance and a hand-greeting to his wife and daughters at the library window, they saw with astonishment that his eyes were full of tears.

But the joy of the present, and the promises of the future, filled the hearts of those who remained behind to overflowing, and the evening passed amid gaiety and pleasure.

Baron L. drank punch with the domestics till both he and they were quite wrong in the head, and all Louise's good moral preaching was like so

* Emilie Hogquist and Jenny Lind are two great ornaments of the Stockholm theatre; the first an actress, second a singer.

many water-drops on the fire. Henrik was nobly gay, and the beaming expression of his animated, beautiful head, reminded the beholder of an Apollo.

"Where now are all your gloomy forebodings?" whispered Leonore tenderly joyful; "you look to me as if you could even embrace Stern-hok."

"The whole world!" returned Henrik, clasping his sister to his breast, "I am so happy!"

And yet there was one person in the house who was happier than Henrik, and that was his mother. When she looked on the beautiful, glorified countenance of her son, and thought of that which he was and what he would become; when she thought on the laurels which would engarland his beloved head, on the future which awaited her favourite, her summer child—Oh! then bloomed the high summer of maternal joy in her breast, and she revelled in a nameless happiness—a happiness so great that she was almost anxious, because it appeared to her too great to be borne on earth!

And yet for all that—and we say it with grateful joy—the earth can bear a great degree of happiness; can bear it for long without its bringing with it a curse or a disappointment. It is in stillness and in retirement where this good fortune blooms the best, and on that account the world knows little of it, and has little faith in it. But, thank God! it may be abundantly found in all times and in all countries; and it is—we whisper this to the blessed ones in order that we may rejoice with them—it is of extremely rare occurrence when it happens in actual life, as, for the sake of effect, it happens in books, that a strong current of happiness carries along with it unhappiness as in a drag-rope.

CHAPTER VI.

UNHAPPINESS.

NIGHT succeeded the joyful evening, and the members of the Frank family lay deep in the arms of sleep, when suddenly, at the hour of midnight, they were awoke by the cry of "fire! fire!"

The house was on fire, and smoke and flames met them at every turn; for the conflagration spread with incredible speed. An inconceivable confusion succeeded: one sought for another; one called on another—mother, and children, and domestics!

Only half-dressed, and without the means of saving the least thing, the inhabitants of the house assembled themselves in the market-place, where an innumerable crowd of people streamed together, and began to work the fire engines; whilst church bells tolled violently, and the alarm drums were beaten wildly and dully up and down the streets. Henrik dragged with him the young Baron L., who was speechless and much injured by the fire.

The mother cast a wild searching look around among her children, and suddenly exclaiming "Gabriele!" threw herself with a thrilling cry of anguish into the burning house. A circle of people hastily surrounded the daughters, in order to prevent their following her; and at the same moment two men broke forth from them, and hastened with the speed of lightning after her. *The one was her beautiful, now more than ever beautiful, son. The other resembled one of the Cyclops, as art has represented them at work in*

their subterranean smithies, excepting that he had two eyes, which in this moment flashed forth flames, as if bidding defiance to those with which he was about to combat. Both vanished amid the conflagration.

A moment's silence ensued: the alarm drum ceased to beat; the people scarcely breathed; the daughters wrung their hands silently, and the fire-bell called anxiously to the ineffectual engine-showers, for the flames rose higher and higher.

All at once a shout was sent from the mass of the people; all hearts beat joyfully, for the mother was borne in the arms of her son from amid the flames, which stretched forth their hissing tongues towards her!—and—now another shout of exultation! The modern Cyclop, in one word Mr. Munter, stood in the window of the second story, and, amid the whirlwind of smoke, was seen a white form, which he pressed to his bosom. A ladder was quickly raised, and Jeremias Munter, blackened and singed, but nevertheless happy, laid the fainting but unhurt Gabriele in the arms of her mother and sisters.

After this, he and Henrik returned to the burning house, from which they were fortunate enough to save the desk containing the Judge's most valuable papers. A few trifles, but of no great importance, were also saved. But this was all. The house, which was of wood, spite of every effort to save it, was burned to the ground, but, as it stood detached, without communicating the fire to any other.

When Henrik, enfeebled with his exertions, returned to his family, he found them all quartered in the small dwelling of the Assessor, which also lay in the market place; while he seemed to have multiplied himself into ten persons, in order to provide his guests with whatever they required; and his old housekeeper, what with the fire, and what with so many guests, who were to be provided for in that simply-supplied establishment, was almost crazed. But the good master of the house had help at hand for every body: he prepared coffee, he made beds, and seemed altogether to forget his own somewhat severe personal injuries by the fire. He joked about himself and his affairs at the same time that he wiped tears from his eyes, which he could not but shed over the misfortunes of his friends. Affectionate and determined, he provided for every thing and for every one; whilst Louise and Leonore assisted him with quiet resolution.

"Wilt thou be reasonable, coffee-pot, and not boil over, since thou hast to provide coffee for ladies!" said the Assessor in jesting anger. "Here, Miss Leonore, are drops for the mother and Eva. Sister Louise, be so good as to take my whole storeroom in hand; and you, young sir," said he to Henrik, as he seized him suddenly by the arm, and gazed sharply into his face, "come you with me, for I must take you rather particularly in hand."

There was indeed not a moment to lose; a violent effusion of blood from the chest, placed the young man's life in momentary danger. Munter tore off his coat, and opened a vein at the very moment in which he lost all consciousness.

"Now then a tea-kettle!" said the doctor, as Henrik breathed again, "how can people be so foolish when they are such—clever fellows! Nay now all danger for the time is over. Death has been playing his jokes with us to-night! Now, like polite knights, let us be again in at-

teendance on the ladies. Wait, I must just have a little water for my face, that I need not look any more than is necessary, like 'the Knight of the Rueful Countenance'!"

CHAPTER VII.

THE CONSEQUENCES.

THE sun of the next morning shone brightly on the glistening snow-covered roofs round the market-place, and dyed the smoke clouds, which rose slowly from the ruins of the burnt-down house, with the most gorgeous tints of purple, gold, and sulphur-blue, whilst hundreds of little sparrows raked and picked about in the ashy-flakes which were scattered over the snow in the market-place and churchyard, with exulting twitterings.

Both mother and daughters looked with tearful eyes towards the smoking place, where had so lately stood their dearly-beloved home; but yet no one gave themselves up to sorrow. Eva alone wept much, but that from a cause of grief concealed in her own heart. She knew that Major R. had passed the night in the city, and yet for all that she had not seen him.

With the morning came much bustle and a crowd of people into the dwelling of the Assessor. Families came who offered to the roofless household both shelter and entertainment; young girls came with their clothes; servants came with theirs for the servants of the family; elegant services of furniture were sent in; the baker sent baskets full of bread; the brewer beer; another sent wine, and so on. It was a scene in social life of the most beautiful description, and which showed how greatly esteemed and beloved the Franks were.

Mrs. Gunilla came so good and zealous, ready to contend with anybody who would contend with her, to convey her old friends in her carriage to the dwelling which she had prepared for them in all haste. The Assessor did not strive with her, but saw, in silence, his guests depart, and with a tear in his eye looked after the carriage which carried Eva away from his house. The house seemed now so dark and desolate to him.

On the evening of this same day the father returned into his family circle, and pressed them all to his breast with tears of joy—yes, tears of joy, for all were left to him!

A few days after this he wrote thus to one of his friends—

"Before this occurrence, I knew not how much I possessed in my wife and children; knew not that I had so many good friends and neighbours. I thank God, who has given me such a wife, such children, and such friends! These last have supplied, nay over-supplied all the necessities of my family. I shall begin in spring to rebuild my house on the old foundation.

"How the fire was occasioned I know not, and do not trouble myself to discover. The misfortune has happened, and may serve as a warning for the future, and that is enough. My house has not become impoverished in love, even though it may be so in worldly goods, and that sustains and heals all. The Lord hath given and the Lord hath taken away: blessed be the name of the Lord!"

Probably the Judge would listen to no conjectures respecting the origin of the fire. We will

venture, however, not the less on that account to give our conjectures—thus, it is very probable that the fire had its origin in the chamber of the young Baron L., and that also he, in his scarcely half sober state, might have been the occasion of it. Probably he himself regarded the affair in this light—but this however is certain, that this event, in connexion with the behaviour of the Franks towards him, occasioned a great change in the temper and character of this young man. His father came for him shortly after this, and took him to consult a celebrated oculist in Copenhagen; in consequence of his eyes having suffered severely in the fire.

Our eyes will see him again, only at a much later period of our history.

The daughters of the house busied themselves earnestly with the already-spoken-of plans for themselves, that they might lighten the anxieties of their parents in their adverse circumstances, and that without being burdensome to anybody else. Eva wished at first to receive an invitation to a country-seat in the neighbourhood, not far from that where Major R. was at present. Axelholm opened itself, heart, arms, main-building and wings, for the members of the Frank family; there were wanting no opportunities for colonization; but the Judge besought his children so earnestly to decline all these, and for the present to remain altogether.

"In a few months," said he, "perhaps in spring, you can do what you like; but now—let us remain together. I must have you all around me, in order to feel that I really possess you all. I cannot bear the thoughts of losing any one of you at present."

The thought of parting appeared likewise soon to weigh heavily upon him. Henrik, since the night of the conflagration, had scarcely had a moment free from suffering; a violent, incessant beating of the heart had remained since then, and the pain of this was accompanied by dangerous attacks of spasms, which, notwithstanding all remedies, appeared rather to increase than otherwise. This disturbed the Judge so much the more, as now, more than ever, he loved and valued his son. Since the night of the fire it might be said that, for the first time, affection was warm between father and son.

The Mahomedan says beautifully, that when the angel of death approaches, the shadow of his wings falls upon him from a distance. From the beginning of his illness Henrik's soul appeared to be darkened by unfriendly shadows, and the first serious outbreak of disease revealed itself in depression and gloom. Oh! it was not easy for the young man, richly gifted as he was with whatever could beautify life on earth, standing as he did at the commencement of a path where fresh laurels and the roses of love beckoned to him, it was not easy to turn his glance from a future like this, to listen to the words which night and day his beating heart whispered to him: "Thou wilt descend to thy grave! nor will I cease knocking till the door of the tomb opens to thee!"

But to a mind like Henrik's the step from darkness to light was not wide. There was that something in his soul which enables man to say to the Lord of life and earth—

The dreaded judgment-down in thine own hand is writ—
We kiss it; bow our heads, and silently submit.

Henrick had one day a long conversation with

his stillful and anxious physician Munter, who when he left him had tears in his eyes; but over Henrik's countenance, on the contrary, when he returned to his family, although he was paler than usual, was a peculiarly mild and solemn repose, which seemed to diffuse itself through his whole being. From this moment his temper of mind was changed; he was now mild and calm, yet at the same time more joyous and amiable than ever. His eyes had an indescribable clearness and beauty; the shadow had passed away from his soul altogether.

But deeper and deeper lay the shadow over one person, who from the beginning of Henrik's illness was no longer like herself—and that was Henrik's mother. It is true that she worked and spoke as formerly, but a knowing anguish lived in her; she appeared absent from the passing business of life; and every occupation which had not reference, in some way or other, to her son, was indifferent or painful to her. The daughters kept carefully from her any thing which might be disturbing to her mind. She devoted herself almost exclusively to her son; and many hours full of rich enjoyment were spent by these two, who soon, perhaps—must separate for so long!

Every strong mental excitement was interdicted to Henrik; his very illness would not admit of it. He must renounce his beloved studies; but his living spirit, which could not sleep, refreshed itself at the youthful fountains of art. He occupied himself much with the works of a poet who, during his short life, had suffered much and sung much also, and from amid whose crown of thorns the loveliest "Lilies of Sharon" had blossomed. The works of Stagnelius* were his favourite reading. He himself composed many songs, and his mother sang them to him during the long winter evenings. According to his opinion, his mother sang better than his sisters; and he rejoiced himself in the pure strength which triumphantly exalted him in this poet above the anguish and fever of life.

It was observed that about this time he often turned the conversation, in the presence of his mother, to the brighter side of death. It seemed as if he wished to prepare her gradually for the possibly near separation, and to deprive it beforehand of its bitterness. Elise had formerly loved conversations of this kind; had loved whatever tended to diffuse light over the darker scenes of life; but now she always grew paler when the subject was introduced; uneasiness expressed itself in her eyes, and she endeavoured, with a kind of terror, to put an end to it.

One evening as the family, together with Mr. Munter, were assembled in the confidential hour of twilight, they began to speak about dreams, and then about death. Henrik mentioned the ancient comparison of sleep and death, which he said he considered less striking as regarded its unconsciousness than its resemblance in the awaking.

"And in what do you especially consider this resemblance to consist?" asked Leonore.

"In the perfect retention and re-animation of consciousness, of memory, of the whole condition of the soul," replied he, "which is experienced in the morning after the dark night."

* Eric Stagnelius, who was born in 1793, and died in 1823, would have been, it is probable, had a longer life been granted to him, one of the most distinguished poets of the age. His poems, epic, dramatic, and lyric, fill three volumes. "*Liljer i Sharon*"—Lilies of Sharon, is the general title of his lyrics.

"Good," said the Assessor, "and possible; but what can we know about it?"

"All that revelation has made known to us," replied Henrik with an animated look: "do we really need any stronger light on this subject than that afforded us by our own race, who was dead and yet rose again from the grave, and who exhibited himself after his sleep in the dark dwelling with precisely the same dispositions, the same friendships, and with the most perfect remembrance of the least as well as the greatest events of his earthly existence? What a clear, what a friendly light has not this circumstance diffused around the dark gates of the tomb! It has united the two worlds! it has thrown a bridge over the gloomy deep; it enables the drooping wanderer to approach it without horror; it enables him to say to his friends on the evening of life, 'Good night!' with the same calmness with which he can speak those words to them on the evening of the day."

An arm was thrown convulsively round Henrik, and the voice of his mother whispered, in a tone of despair, to him, "You must not leave us, Henrik! you must not!" and with these words she sunk unconscious on his breast.

From this evening Henrik never again introduced in the presence of his mother a subject which was so painful to her. He sought to calm and cheer her, and his sisters helped him truly in the same work. They now had less desire than ever to leave home and to mingle in society generally; yet notwithstanding they did so occasionally, because their brother wished it, and it enabled them to have something to tell at home, which could entertain and enliven both him and his mother. These reports were generally made in Henrik's room, and how heartily did they not laugh there! Ah! in a cordially united family, care may take firm footing for one moment and in the very next be chased away! Eva appeared, during this time to forget her own trouble, that she also might be a flower in the garland of comfort and tenderness which was bound around the favourite of the family; the Judge too, tore himself more frequently than hitherto from his occupations, and united himself to the family circle.

A more attractive sick chamber than Henrik's can hardly be imagined, and that he himself felt. Enfeebled by the influence of disease, his beautiful eyes often became filled with tears from slight causes, and he would exclaim "I am happy—too happy! What a blessedness to be able to live! That is happiness! that is the summer of the soul! Even now, amid my sufferings, I feel myself made through you so rich, so happy!" and then he would stretch forth his hands to those of his mother or his sisters, and press them to his lips or to his bosom.

In a while, an interval of amendment occurred, and he suffered much less; a sentiment of joy diffused itself through the house, and Henrik himself appeared at times to entertain hopes of life. He could now go out again and inhale the fresh winter air—his favourite air. The Judge often accompanied him, and it was beautiful to see the powerful, vigorous father supporting with his arm the pale but handsome son, whenever his steps became weary; to see him curbing his own peculiarly hasty movements, and conducting him slowly homewards—it was beautiful to see the expression in the countenance of each.

People talk a great deal about the beauty of

maternal love—paternal love has perhaps something yet more beautiful and affecting in it; and it is my opinion that he who has had the happiness of experiencing the careful culture of a loving, yet at the same time upright father, can, with fuller feeling and with more inward understanding than any other, lift his heart to heaven in that universal prayer of the human race, "Our Father which art in heaven!"

Several weeks passed on, and a lady who was an intimate friend of the family was about to undertake a journey with her daughter to the city where Petrea was visiting, and desired greatly to take Gabriele with her, who was the dearest friend of the young Amalie. Gabriele would very gladly have embraced the opportunity of visiting her beloved sister, and of seeing at the same time something of the world, but now when Henrik was ill, she could not think about it; she was quite resolved not to separate herself from him. He, on the contrary, was zealously bent upon it, and wished greatly that she should make this journey, which would be so extremely agreeable to her.

"Don't you see," said he, "that Gabriele sits here and makes herself pale with looking at me, and that is so utterly unnecessary, especially now I am so much better, and when I certainly in a little time shall be quite well again. Journey, journey away, dear Gabriel, I beseech you! You shall cheer us in the mean time with your letters, and when at Easter you return with Petrea you will no longer have an ailing suffering brother, for I will manage it so that I will be quite well by that time!"

She was talked to also on other sides, especially by the young, lively Amalie, and at length she was over persuaded; was made to believe, that for the present all danger for her brother was passed, and she commenced the journey with a merry jest on her lips, but with tears in her eyes.

This was the first flight of "our little lady" from home.

Not a word was heard from Major R.; and although Eva continued reserved towards her own family, she appeared to be so much calmer than formerly that they all began to be quite easy on her account. The Judge, who in consequence of her behaviour evinced towards her a grateful tenderness, and endeavoured to gratify her slightest wishes, gave his consent that in the early commencement of spring she should go to M—s. He hoped that by that time the Major would be far removed from the country; but it was not long before a painful discovery was made.

On a dark evening at the beginning of March, two persons stood in deep but low discourse under a tree in St. Mary's churchyard.

"How childish you are Eva!" said the one, "with your fears and your doubts! and how pusillanious in your love. If you would learn, lovely angel! how true love speaks, listen to me,

"Pourquoi fit on l'amour, si son pouvoir n'affronte,
Et la vie et la mort, et la haine et la honte!
Je ne demande, je ne veux pas savoir
Si rien a de ton cœur terri le pur miroir:
Je t'aime! tu le sais! Que l'importe tout le reste!"

"O Victor," answered the trembling voice of Eva, "my fault is not the having too little love for you. Ah, I feel indeed, and I evince it in my conduct, that my love to you is greater than my love for father, mother, sisters, or all the world! And yet I know that it is wrong; my heart raises itself against me—but I cannot resist your power."

"On that account am I called Victor, my angel," said he; "heaven itself has sanctioned my power—and your Victor am I also, my sweet Eva; is it not so?"

"Ah! only too much so," sighed Eva. "But now, Victor, spare my weakness; do not desire to see me again till I go in spring in a month's time to M—s. Do not desire—"

"Demand no such promises from Victor, Eva," said he; "he will not bind himself so! but you—you must do what your Victor wills, else he cannot believe that you love him. What—you will refuse to take a few steps only in order to gladden your eyes and your heart—in order to see and to hear him; in truth you do not love him!"

"Ah, I love you, I adore you," returned Eva; "I could endure anything on your account—even the pangs of my own conscience; but my parents, my brother and sisters! they are so good, so excellent—Ah! Yet sometimes the love which I have for them contends with the love which I have for you. Do not string the bow too tightly, Victor! And now, farewell, beloved! In a month's time you will see me, your Eva, again in M—s."

"Stop!" said he, "do you think you are to leave me in that way! Where is my ring?"

"On my heart," returned she, "day and night it rests there—farewell, let me go!"

"Say once more that you love me above every thing in this world!" said he, "that you belong only to me!"

"Only to you! farewell!" and with these words Eva tore herself away from him, and hastened with flying feet, like one terrified, across the churchyard, and the Major followed her slowly. A dark form stepped at that moment hastily forward, as if it had arisen from one of the graves, and met the Major face to face. It seemed to him as if a cold wind passed through his heart, for the form, tall and silent, and at that dark hour, and in the churchyard, had something in it ominous and spectre-like, and as it had evidently advanced to him with design, he paused suddenly, and asked sharply, "Who are you?"

"Eva's father!" replied a suppressed but powerful voice, and by the up-flaring light of a lamp which the wind drove towards them, the Major saw the eyes of the Judge riveted upon him with a wrathful and threatening expression. His heart sank for a moment, but in the next, he spoke with all his accustomed haughty levity.

"Now there is no necessity for me," said he, "to watch longer after her;" and so saying he turned hastily aside, and vanished in the darkness.

The Judge followed his daughter without nearing her. When he came home, such a deep and painful grief lay on his brow as had never been observed there before.

For the first time in his life the powerful head of the Judge seemed actually bowed.

At this time Sternbok came to the city quite unexpectedly. He had heard of the misfortune which had befallen the Franks, as well as the part which Henrik acted on this occasion, and of the illness which was the consequence of it, and he came now in order to see him before he travelled abroad. This visit, which had occasioned Sternbok to diverge as much as sixty English miles out of his way, surprised and deeply affected Henrik, who, as he entered the room, met

with the most candid expression of cordial devotion. Sternhok seized his outstretched hand, and a sudden paleness overspread his manly countenance as he remarked the change a few weeks' illness had made in Henrik's appearance.

"It is beautiful of you to come to me—my thanks for it, Sternhok!" said Henrik from his heart, "otherwise," continued he, "you would probably have seen me no more in this world; and I have wished so much to say one word to you before we separated thus."

Both were silent for some minutes.

"What would you say to me, Henrik?" at length asked Sternhok, while an extraordinary emotion was depicted in his countenance.

"I would thank you," returned Henrik cordially, "thank you for your severity towards me, and tell you how sincerely I now acknowledge it to have been just, and wholesome for me also. I would thank you, because by that means you have been a more real friend, and I am now perfectly convinced how honestly and well you have acted towards me. This impression, this remembrance of our acquaintance, is the only one which I will take away with me when I leave this world. You have not been able to love me, but that was my own fault. I have sorrowed over the knowledge of that, but now I have submitted to it. In the mean time it would be very pleasant to me to know that my faults—that my late behaviour towards you, had not left behind it too repulsive an impression—it would be very pleasant for me to believe that you were able to think kindly of me when I am no more!"

A deep crimson flamed on Sternhok's countenance, and his eyes glistened as he replied, "Henrik, I feel more than ever in this moment that I have not shown justice towards you. Several later circumstances have opened my eyes, and now—Henrik, can you give me your friendship! mine you have for ever!"

"O this is a happy moment!" said Henrik, with increasing emotion, "through my whole life I have longed for it, and now for the first time it is given me—now when—"

"But why," said Sternhok warmly, "why speak so positively about your death? I will hope and believe that your condition is not so dangerous. Let me consult a celebrated foreign physician on your case—or better still, make the journey with me, and put yourself under the care of Dr. K—. He is celebrated for his treatment of diseases of the heart; let me conduct you to him; certainly you can and will recover!"

Henrik shook his head mournfully: "There lies his work," said he, pointing to an open book, "and from it I know all concerning my own condition. Do you see, Nils Gabriel," continued he, with a beautiful smile, as he placed his arm on the shoulder of his friend and pointed with his other towards heaven, gazing on him the while with eyes that seemed larger than ever—for towards death the eyes increase in size and brilliancy—"do you see," said he, "there wanders your star. It ascends! for certain a bright path lies before; but when it beams upon your renown it will look down upon my grave! I have no doubt whatever on this point. Some time ago this thought was bitter to me; it is so now no more! When the knowledge depresses me that I have accomplished so very little on earth, I will endeavour to console myself with the conviction that you will be able to do so much more, and that either in this world or the next I shall rejoice over your usefulness and your happiness!"

Sternhok answered not a word; large tears rolled down his cheeks, and he pressed Henrik warmly to his breast.

On Henrik's account he endeavoured to give the conversation a calmer turn, but the heart of his poor friend swelled high, and it was now too full of life and feeling to find rest in anything but the communication of these.

The connexion between the two young men seemed now different to what it had ever been before. It was Henrik who now led the conversation, and Sternhok who followed him, and listened to him with attention and the most unequivocal sympathy, whilst the young man gave such free scope to his thoughts and presentiments as he had never ventured to do before in the presence of the severe critic. But the truth is, there belongs to a dweller on the borders of the kingdom of death a peculiar rank, a peculiar worth, and man believes that the whispering of spirits from the mysterious land reaches the ear which bows itself to them—on this account the wise and the strong of earth listen silently like disciples, and piously like little children, to the precepts which are breathed forth from dying lips.

The entrance of the Judge gave another turn to the conversation, which Sternhok soon led to Henrik's last works. He directed his discourse principally to the Judge, and spoke of them with all the ability of a real connoisseur, and with such entire and cordial praise as surprised Henrik as much as it cheered him.

It is a very great pleasure to hear oneself praised, and well praised too, by a person whom one highly esteems, and particularly when, at the same time, the person is commonly niggardly of his praise. Henrik experienced at that moment this feeling in its highest degree; and this pleasure was accompanied by the yet greater pleasure of seeing himself understood, and in such a manner by Sternhok as made himself more clear to himself. In this moment he seemed, now for the first time, to comprehend in a perfectly intelligible manner his own talents, and what he wished to do, and what he was able to do. The fountain of life swelled forth strongly in his breast.

"You make me well again, Nils Gabriel!" exclaimed he; "you give me new life. I will recover; recover in order again to live, in order to work better and more confidently than I have hitherto done. As yet I have done nothing; but now, now I could—I feel new life in me—I have never yet felt myself so well as now! Certainly I shall now recover, or indeed—is the best wine reserved for me till the last?"

The evening sped on agreeably, and with animation in the family circle. The blessed angels of heaven were not more beautiful or more joyous than Henrik. He joked with his mother and sisters, nay, even with Sternhok, in the gayest manner, and was one of the liveliest who partook of the citron-soufflé which Louise served up for supper, and which she herself had helped to prepare, and of which she was not a little proud. Yes, indeed, she was almost ready to believe that it was this which had given new life to Henrik, and the power of which she considered to be wonderfully operative. But ah!—

At the very moment when Henrik jested with Louise on this very subject, he was seized by the most violent suffering.

This suffering continued uninterruptedly for three days, and deprived the sick young man of consciousness; whilst it seemed to be leading

him quickly to that bound which mercy has set to human sufferings. On the second day after this paroxysm Henrik was seized with desire for change of resting-place, which may be commonly regarded as the sign that the soul is preparing for its great change of abode. The Judge himself bore his son in his arms from room to room, and from bed to bed. No sleep visited the eyes of his family during these terrible days; whilst his mother, with eyes tearless and full of anguish riveted upon her son, followed him from room to room, and from bed to bed; now hanging over his pillow, now seated at the foot of his bed, and smiling tenderly upon him when he appeared to know her, and articulating his name in a low and almost inaudible voice.

On the evening of the third day the poor youth regained his consciousness. He recognised his family again, and spoke kindly to them. He saw that they were pale and weary, and besought them incessantly to go to rest. The Assessor, who was present, united earnestly in this request, and assured them that, according to all appearances, Henrik would now enjoy an easy sleep, and that he himself would watch by him through the night. The father and daughters retired to rest; but when they endeavoured to persuade the mother, she only waved with her hand, whilst a mournful smile seemed to say, "it is of no use whatever to talk to me about it."

"I may remain with you, Henrik?" said she, beseechingly.

He smiled, took her hand, and laid it on his breast; and in the same moment closing his eyes, a calm refreshing sleep stole over him. The Assessor sat silently beside them, and observed them both: it was not long, however, before he was obliged to leave them, being summoned suddenly to some one who was dangerously ill. He left them with the promise to return in the course of the night. Munter was called in the city the night-physician, because there was no one like him who appeared earnestly willing to give his help by night as by day.

The mother breathed deeply when she saw herself alone with her son. She folded her hands, and raised her eyes to heaven with an expression which through the whole of the foregoing days had been foreign to them. It was no longer restless, almost murmuring anxiety; it was a mournful, yet at the same time, deep, perfect, nay, almost loving resignation. She bent over her son, and spoke in a low voice out of the depths of her affectionate heart.

"Go, my sweet boy, go! I will no longer hold thee back, since it is painful to thee! May the deliverer come! Thy mother will no longer contend with thee to retain thee! May he come and make an end of thy sufferings! I—will then be satisfied! Go, then, my first-born, my summer-child; and if there may never more come a summer to the heart of thy mother—still go! that thou mayst have rest! Did I make thy cradle sweet, my child! so would I not embitter by my lamentations thy death-bed! Blessed be thou! Blessed be He also who gave thee to me, and who now takes thee from me to a better home! Some time, my son, I shall come to thee; go thou beforehand, my child! Thou art weary; so weary! Thy last wandering was heavy to thee; now thou wilt rest. Come thou good deliverer, come thou beloved death, and give rest to his heart; but easily, easily. Let him not suffer more—let him not endure more. Never did he give care to his parents—"

At this moment Henrik opened his eyes and fixed them calmly and full of expression on his mother.

"Thank God!" said he, "I feel no more pain."

"Thanks and praise be given to God, my child!" said she.

Mother and son looked on each other with deep and cheerful love! they understood each other perfectly.

"When I am no more," said he, with a faint and broken voice, "then—tell it to Gabriele prudently; she has such tender feelings—and she is not strong. Do not tell it to her on a day—when it is cold and dull—but—on a day—when the sun shines warm—when all things look bright and kindly—then, then tell her—that I am gone first to greet her—and tell her from me—that it is not difficult—to die!—that there is a sun on the other side—"

He ceased, but with a loving smile on his lips, and his eyes closed their lids as from very weariness.

Presently afterward he spoke again, but in a very low voice. "Sing me something, mother," said he, "I shall then sleep more calmly, 'They knock, I come!'"

These words were the beginning of a song which Henrik had himself written, and set to music some time before, during a night of suffering.

The genius of poetry seemed to have deserted him during the latter part of his illness; this was painful to him, but his mind remained the same, and the spirit of poetry lived still in the hymn which his mother now, at his request, sang in a trembling voice:

They knock! I come! yet ere on the way
To the night of the grave I am pressing,
Thou Angel of Death, give me yet one lay—
One hymn of thanksgiving and blessing.

Have thanks, O Father! in heaven high,
For thy gift, all gifts exceeding;
For life! and that grieved or glad I could fly.
To thee, nor find thee unheeding.

Oh thanks for life, and thanks too for death,
The bound of all trouble and sighing;
How bitter! yet sweet 'tis to yield our breath
When thine is the heart of the dying!

By our path of trial thou plantest still
Thy lilies of consolation;
But the loveliest of all to do thy will—
Be it done in resignation!

Farewell, lovely earth, on whose bosom I lay;
Farewell, all ye dear friends, mourning;
Farewell, and forgive all the faults of my day:
My heart now in death is burning!

"It is burning!" repeated Henrik in a voice of suffering. "It is terrible! Mother! mother!" said he, looking at her with a restless glance.

"Your mother is here!" said she, tending over him.

"Ah! then all is right!" said he again, calmly. "Sing, my mother," added he, again closing his eyes, "I am weary."

She sang,

We part! but in parting our steps we bend
Alone towards that glorious morrow,
Where friend no more shall part from friend,
Where none knoweth heartache or sorrow!

Farewell! all is dark to my failing sight,
Your loved forms from my faint gaze receding,
'Tis dark, but oh! far beyond the night
I see light o'er the darkness ascending!

"Oh! if you only knew how serene it is! It is divine!" said the dying one, as he stretched forth his arms, and then dropped them again.

A change passed over the countenance of the young man; death had touched his heart gently.

and its pulsations ceased. At the same moment a wonderful inspiration animated the mother; her eyes beamed brightly, and never before had her voice so beautiful, so clear a tone as while she sang,

Thou callest O Father! with glad accord
come! Ye dear ones we sever!
Now the pang is past! now behold I the Lord—
Praise be thine, O Eternal, forever!

Judge Frank was awoke out of his uneasy sleep by the song, whose tone seemed to have a something supernatural in it. A few moments passed before he could convince himself that the voice which he heard was really that of his wife.

He hastened with indescribable anxiety to the sick room; Elise yet sung the last verse as he entered, and, casting his eyes on her countenance, he exclaimed, "My God!" and clasped his hands together.

The song ceased: a dreadful consciousness thrust itself like a sword through the heart of the mother. She saw before her the corpse of her son, and with a faint cry of horror she sank, as if lifeless, upon the bed of death.

CRAPTER VIII.

ELISE TO CECILIA.

Two months later.

"WHEN I last wrote to you, my Cecilia, it was winter. Winter, severe and icy, had also gathered itself about my heart—my life's joy was wrapped in his winding-sheet, and it seemed to me as if no more spring could bloom, no more life could exist; and that I should never again have the heart to write a cheerful or hopeful word. And now—now it is spring! The lark sings again the ascension-song of the earth; the May-sun diffuses his warming beam through my chamber, and the grass becomes already green upon the grave of my first-born, my favourite! And I—O Lord! thou who smitest, thou also healest, and I will praise thee! for every affliction which thou sendest becometh good if it be only received with patience. And if thou concealest thyself for a season, thou revealest thyself yet soon again, kinder and more glorious than before! For a little while and we see thee not, and again for a little while and we see thee, and our hearts rejoice and drink strength and enjoyment out of the cup which thou, Almighty One, hast filled. Yes, everything in life becomes good, if that life be only spent in God!

"But in those dark winter hours it was often gloomy and tumultuous within me. Ah, Cecilia, I was not willing that he should die! He was my only son, my first-born child. I suffered most at his birth; I sang most beside his cradle; my heart leaped up first and highest with maternal joy at his childish play. He was my summer-child, born in the midsummer of nature and of my life, and my strength, and, then, he was so full of life, so beautiful, so good! No, I was not willing that he should have died; and as the time drew nearer and nearer, and I saw that it must be—then it was dark in me. But the last night—Oh, it was a most wonderful night! then it was quite otherwise.

Do you know, Cecilia, that I sung gayly, triumphantly, by the deathbed of my first-born! Now I cannot comprehend it. But this night—

sufferings had reconciled me to his death; they abated as death approached, and he besought of me, as he had often done in the years of his childhood, to sing him to sleep. I sang—I was able to sing. He received pleasure from the song and strength also, and with a heavenly smile, while heavenly pictures seemed to float before his eyes, he said, 'Ah, it is divine!' and I sang better and ever clearer. I saw his eyes change themselves, his breath became suspended, and I knew that then was the moment of separation between soul and body—between me and him! but I did not then feel it, and I sang on. It seemed to me as if the song sustained the spirit and raised it to heaven. In that moment I was happy; for even I, as well as he, was exalted above every earthly pain.

"The exclamation of my name awoke me from my blessed dream, and I saw the dead body of my son—after this I saw nothing more.

"There was a long, deep stupor, from which when I recovered I felt a heart beating against my temples. I raised my eyes and saw my husband; my head was resting on his breast, and with the tenderest words he was calling me back to life; my daughters stood around me weeping, and kissing my hands and my clothes; I also wept, and then I felt better; it was then morning, and the dawn came into my chamber. I threw my arms round my husband's neck, and said, 'Ernst, love me! I will endeavour—'

"I could say no more, but he understood me, thanked me warmly, and pressed me close to his bosom.

"I did endeavour to be calm, and with God's help I succeeded. For several hours of the day I lay still on my bed, while Eva, whose voice is remarkably sweet, read aloud to me. I got up for tea, and endeavoured to be as usual; my husband and my daughters supported me, and all was peace and love.

"But when the day was ended, and Ernst and I were alone in our chamber, a fear of the night, of bed, and a sleepless pillow, seized hold of me; I therefore seated myself on the sofa, and prayed Ernst to read to me, for I longed for the consolations of the Gospel. He seated himself by me and read; but the words, although spoken by his manly, firm voice, passed at this time impressionless over my inward sense. I understood nothing, and all within me was dark and vacant. All at once, some one knocked softly at the door, and Ernst, not a little astonished, said, 'Come in;' the door was opened, and Eva entered. She was very pale, and appeared excited, but yet, at the same time, firm and determined. She approached us softly, and, sinking down on her knees between us, took our hands between hers. I would have raised her, but Ernst held me back, and said, mildly but gravely, 'Let her alone!'

"'My father, my mother!' said Eva, with humbling voice, 'I have given you uneasiness—pardon me! I have grieved you—I will not do it again. Ah! I will not now lay a stone on your burden. See, how disobedient I have been—this ring, and these letters, I have received against your will and against my promises, from Major R. I will now send them back. See here! read what I have written to him; our acquaintance is for ever broken! Pardon me, that I have chosen these hours to-busy you with my affairs, but I feared my own weakness when the force of this hour shall have passed. Oh, my parents! I feel, I know that he is not worthy to be your

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son! But I have been, as it were, bewitched—I have loved him beyond measure. Ah, I love him still—nay! do not weep, mother—you shall never again shed a tear of grief over me—you have wept already enough on my account. Since Henrik's death everything in me is changed—fear not for me, I will conquer this, and will become your obedient, your happy child; only require not from me that I should give my hand to another—never will I marry, never belong to another! But for you, my parents, will I live, and with you be happy! Here, my father, take this, and send it back to him whom I will no more see! And—oh, love me! love me!

"Tears bedewed the face which she bowed down to her father's knee. Never had she looked so lovely, so attractive! Ernst was greatly affected; he raised his hand as if in blessing upon her head, which he raised, and said—

"When you were born, Eva, you lay as if dead; in my arms you first opened your eyes to the light, and I thanked God—but I thank him manifold more for you in this moment, in which I see in you the joy and blessing of our age—in which you have been able to combat with your own heart, and to do that which is right! God bless you! God reward you!"

"He held her for a long time to his bosom, and his tears wetted her forehead. I also clasped her in my arms, and let her feel my love and my gratitude, and then, with a look which beamed through tears, she left us.

"We called her 'our blessed child' at that time, for she had blessed us with a great consolation. She had raised again our sunken hearts.

"Ernst went to the window and looked silently into the star-lighted night; I followed him, and my glance accompanied his, which in this moment was so beautiful and bright, and laying his arm around me he spoke thus:

"It is good—it is so intended—and that is the essential thing! He is gone! What more? We must all go; all, sooner or later! He might not perfect his work; but he stood ready, ready in will and ability when he was called to the higher work-place! Lord and Master, thou hast taken the disciple to thyself—well for him that he was ready! That is the most important for us all!"

"Ernst's words and state of mind produced great effect upon me. Peace returned to my spirit. In the stillness of the night I did not sleep, but I rested on his bosom. It was calm around me and in me, and in the secret of my soul I wished that it might ever remain so, that no more day might dawn upon me, and no more sun shine upon my weary, painful eyes.

"How the days creep on! On occasions of great grief it always appears as if time stood still. All things appear to stand still, or slowly and painfully to roll on, in dark circles; but it is not so! Hours and days go on in an interminable chain; they rise and sink like the waves of the sea; and carry along with them the vessel of our life: carry it from the islands of joy it is true, but carry it also away from the rocky shores of grief. Hours came for me in which no consolation could appease my heart, in which I in vain combated with myself, and said; 'Now I will read, and then pray, and then sleep!' but yet anguish would not leave me, but followed me still, when I read, prevented me from prayer, and chased away sleep; yes, many such hours have been, but they too are gone; some such may perhaps come yet but I know also that they

too will go. The tenderness of my husband and of my children—the peace of home; the many pleasures within it; the relief of tears; the eternal consolations of the Eternal Word—all these have refreshed and strengthened my soul. It is now much, much better. And then—he died pure and spotless, the youth with the clear glance and the warm heart! He stood, as his father said, ready to go into the higher world. Oh! more than ever have I acknowledged, in the midst of my deep pain, that there is pain more bitter than this; for many a living son is greater grief to his mother than mine—the good one there, under the green mound!

"We have planted fir-trees and poplars around the grave, and often will it be decorated with fresh flowers. No dark grief abides by the grave of the friendly youth. Henrik's sisters mourn for him deep and still—perhaps Gabriele mourns him most of all. One sees it not by day, for she is generally gay as formerly; a little song, a gay jest, a little adornment of the house, all goes on just as before to enliven the spirits of her sisters. But in the night, when all rest in their beds, she is heard weeping, often so painfully—it is a dew of love on the grave of her brother; but then every morning is the eye again bright and smiling.

"On the first tidings of our loss Jacobi hastened to us, and took from Ernst and me in this time of heavy grief all care upon himself, and was to us as the tenderest of sons. Alas! he was obliged very soon to leave us, but the occasion for this was the most joyful. He is about to be nominated for the living of T—; and this promotion, which puts him in the condition soon to marry, affords him also a respectable income, and a sphere of action agreeable to his wishes and accordant with his abilities, and altogether makes him unspeakably happy. Louise also looks forward towards this union and establishment for life with quiet satisfaction, and that, I believe, as much on account of her family as for herself.

"The family affection appears, through the late misfortune, to have received a new accession: my daughters are more amiable than ever in their quiet care to sweeten the lives of their parents. Mrs. Gunilla has been like a mother to me and mine during this time; and many dear evidences of sympathy, from several of the best and noblest in Sweden, have been given to Henrik's parents;—the young poet's pure glory has brightened his house of mourning. 'It is beautiful to have died as he has died,' says our good Assessor, who does not very readily find any thing beautiful in this world.

"And I, Cecilia, should I shut my heart against so many occasions for joy and gratitude, and sit with my sorrow in darkness? O no! I will gladden the human circle in which I live; I will open my heart to the gospel of life and of nature; I will seize hold on the moments, and the good which they bring. No friendly glance, no spring-breeze, shall pass over me unenjoyed or unacknowledged; out of every flower will I suck a drop of honey, and out of every passing hour a drop of eternal life.

"And then—I know it truly—be my life long or short, bear it a joyful or a gloomy colour,

The day will never endure so long
But at length the evening cometh.

The evening in which I may go home—home to my son, my summer-child! And then—O then, shall I perhaps acknowledge the truth of that

prophetic word which has so often animated my soul: 'For behold I create new heavens and a new earth; and the former shall not be remembered nor come into mind. But be ye glad and rejoice forever in that which I create.'

"I have wept much whilst I have written this, but my heart has peace. It is now late. I will creep in to my Ernst, and I feel that I shall sleep calmly by his side.

"Good night, my Cecilia."

CHAPTER IX.

NEW ADVERSITIES.

It was afternoon. The sisters were busily quilting Louise's bridal bed-cover; because, at the end of May, as was determined in the family council, she was to be married. The coverlet was of green silk, and a broad wreath of leafy branches formed its border. This pattern had occasioned a great deal of care and deliberation; but now, also, what joy did it not give rise to, and what ever-enduring admiration of the tasteful, the distinguished, the indescribably good effect which it produced, especially when seen from one side!—Gabriele, to be sure, would have made sundry little objections relative to the connexion of the leaves, but Louise would not allow that there was any weight in them: "The border," said she, "is altogether charming!"

Gabriele had placed a full-blown monthly rose in the light locks of the bride, and had arranged with peculiar grace, around the platted hair at the back of her head, the green rose-leaves like a garland. The effect was lovely, as at this time the sunlight fell upon her head, and her countenance had more than ordinary charm; the cheeks a higher colour; the eyes a clearer blue, as they were often raised from the green rose-wreath and directed towards the window: Jacobi, the new pastor, was expected that evening.

Gabriele went up to her mother, and besought her to notice how well Louise looked, and the rose, how becoming it was to her! The mother kissed her, but forgot to notice Louise in looking on the peculiarly lovely face of "the little lady."

The industrious up-and-down picking of the needles accompanied the joyful conversation of the sisters.

Now they talked about the management of the living; now about the school; now about milk, and now about cheese. They settled about household matters; about meal-times; the arrangement of the table, and such like. In many things, Louise intended to follow the example of home; in others, she should do differently. "People must advance with the age;" she meant there to be great hospitality in the parsonage-house—that was Jacobi's pleasure. Some one of her own family she hoped to have always with her; an especial wing should be built for beloved guests. She would go every Sunday to church, to hear her husband preach or sing the service. If the old wives came to the parsonage with eggs or other little presents, they should always be well entertained and encouraged to come again. All sick-people should be regaled with her elixir, and all misdoers

should be more or less reproved by her. She would encourage all, to the very best of her power, to read, to be industrious, to go to church, and to plant trees. Every Sunday several worthy peasants should be invited to dine at the parsonage with their wives. If the ladies of the Captain and the Steward came to visit her, the tea-kettle should be immediately set on and the card-table prepared. Every young peasant girl should live in service a whole year at the parsonage before she was married, in order to learn how to work and how to behave herself.—N.B. This would be wages enough for her. At all marriages the Pastor and his wife would always be present, the same at christenings; they would extend their hand in sponsorship over the youth, that all might grow up in good-breeding and the fear of God. At Midsummer and in harvest-time there should be a dance and great merry-making at the parsonage for the people—but without brandy; for the rest, nothing should be wanting:

None she forgets, the mistress of the feast,
The beer flows free, the bunch of keys it jingles,
And, without pause, goes on the stormy dance!

Work should be found for all beggars at the Parsonage, and then food; for lazy vagabonds a passing lecture, and then—march! And thus, by degrees, would preparation be made for the Golden Age.

Ah! ruin to the golden plans and to the golden age which she planned! Two letters which were delivered to Louise put a sudden end to them all! One of the letters from Jacobi, was very short, and said only that the parsonage was quite gone from him; but that Louise would not blame him on that account, as soon as she understood the whole affair.

"I long for you inexpressibly," continued Jacobi, "but I must postpone my arrival in H. in order to pay my respects to his Excellence D., who is detained in P. from an attack of gout, which seized him on his journey from Copenhagen to Stockholm. But by the 6th of May I hope certainly to be with you. I have new plans, and I long to lay down all my feelings and all my thoughts on your true breast, my Louise! I will no longer wait and seek. Since fortune perpetually runs out of my way, I will now take a leap and catch it, and in so doing trust in Heaven, in you, and lastly also—on myself. But you must give me your hand. If you will do that, beloved, I shall soon be yours, much happier than now, and eternally,

"Your tenderly devoted,

"J. JACOBI."

The other letter was from an unknown hand—evidently a woman's hand, and was as follows:

"Do not hate me, although I have stood in the way of your happiness. Do not hate me—for I bless you and the noble man with whom you have united your fate. He is my benefactor, and the benefactor of my husband and my children. Oh, these children whose future he has made sure, they will now call on heaven to give a double measure of happiness to him and you for that which he has so nobly renounced. The object of my writing is to obtain your forgiveness, and to pour forth the feelings of a grateful heart to those who can best reward my

benefactor. Will you be pleased on this account to listen to the short, but uninteresting relation of a condition, which, at the same time, is as common as it is mournful?

"Perhaps Mr. Jacobi may at some time or other have mentioned my husband to you, for he was for several years his teacher, and both were much attached to each other. My husband held the office of schoolmaster in W., with honour, for twenty years. His small income, misfortunes which befell us, a quick succession of children, made our condition more oppressive from year to year, and increased the debt which from the very time when we settled down first, we were obliged to incur. My husband sought after a pastoral cure, but he could have recourse to none of those arts which are now so almost universally helpful, and which often conduct the hunter after fortune, and the mean-spirited, rather than the deserving, to the goal of their wishes; he was too simple for that, too modest, and perhaps too proud.

"During the long course of years he had seen his just hopes deceived, and from year to year the condition of his family became more and more melancholy. Sickness had diminished his ability to work, and the fear of not being able to pay his debts gnawed into his health, which was not strong, and the prospect—of his nine unprovided-for children! I know I should deeply affect your heart, if I were to paint to you the picture of this family contending with want; but my tears would blot my writing. Jacobi can do it—he has seen it, he has understood it—for this picture which I had so carefully concealed from every other eye—this pale, family misery I revealed to him, for I was in despair!

"The name of my husband stood on the list of candidates for the living of T—. He had threefold the legally-demanded requisites of Jacobi, and was, over and above, known and beloved by the parish; all the peasants capable of voting, openly declared their intention of choosing him. Two great landed proprietors, however, had the ultimate decision: Count D. and Mr. B. the proprietor of the mines, could, if they two were agreed, they two alone, elect the pastor. They also acknowledged the esteem in which they held my husband, and declared themselves willing to unite in the general choice.

"For the first time in many years did we venture to look up to a brighter future. Presently, however, we learned that a powerful patron of Mr. Jacobi had turned the whole scale in his favour, and that it would be soon decided—the two great proprietors had promised their votes to him, and our condition was more hopeless than ever.

"The day of nomination approached. I did not venture to speak with my strictly conscientious husband of the design which I cherished. I had heard much said of Jacobi's excellent character. I was a distracted wife and mother. I sought out Jacobi, and spoke to him out of the depths of my heart, spoke to his sense of right—to his sense of honour; I showed him how the affair stood for us before he disturbed it, by means which could not be justly called honourable. I feared that my words were bitter, but all the more angel-like was it in Jacobi to hear me with calmness. I pictured to him our adverse circumstances; told him

how he might save us from misery, and besought him to do it.

"My prayer at first was almost wild, and in the beginning Jacobi seemed almost to think it so, but he heard me out; he let me conduct him to the house of his former teacher, saw the consuming anxiety depicted on his pale emaciated countenance—saw that I had exaggerated nothing—he wept, pressed my hand with a word of consolation, and went out hastily.

"The day of nomination came. Jacobi renounced all claims. My husband was elected to the living in T—. Good God! how it sounded in our ears and in our hearts! For a long time we could not believe it. After fifteen years of deceived hopes we hardly dared to believe in such happiness. I longed to embrace the knees of my benefactor, but he was already far distant from us. A few friendly lines came from him, which reconciled my husband to his happiness and Jacobi's renunciation, and which made the measure of his noble behaviour full. I have not yet been able to thank him; but you, his amiable bride, say to him—"

We omit the outpourings which closed this letter; they proceeded from a warm, noble heart, overflowing with happiness and gratitude.

The needles fell from the fingers of the sisters, as the mother, at Louise's request, read this letter aloud, and astonishment, sympathy, and a kind of admiring pleasure might be read in their looks. They all gazed one on the other with silent and tearful eyes.

Gabriele was the first who broke silence: "So then, we shall keep our Louise with us yet longer," said she, gaily, while she embraced her; and all united cordially in the idea.

"But," sighed Leonore, "it is rather a pity, on account of our wedding and parsonage; we had got all so beautifully arranged."

Louise shed a few quiet tears, but evidently not merely over the disappointed expectation. Later in the evening, the mother talked with her, and endeavoured to discover what were her feelings under these adverse circumstances.

Louise replied with all her customary candour, that at first it had fallen very heavily upon her. "I had now," continued she, "fixed my thoughts so much on an early union with Jacobi, I saw so much in my new condition which would be good and joyful for us all. But though this is now—and perhaps for ever, at an end, yet I do not exactly know if I wish it otherwise; Jacobi has behaved so properly, so nobly, I feel that I now prize him higher, and love him more than ever!"

It was difficult to the Judge not to be more cheerful than common this evening. He was inexpressibly affectionate towards his eldest daughter; he was charmed with the way in which she bore her fate, and it seemed to him as if she had grown considerably.

On the following day they quietly went on again with the quilting of the bed-cover while Gabriele read aloud; and thus "the childhood of Eric Meuvred" diverted with its refreshing magic power all thoughts from the parsonage and its lost paradise to the rich middle age of Denmark, and to its young king Eric.

CHAPTER X.

NEW VIEWS AND NEW SCHEMES.

JACOBI was come; Gabriele complained jestingly to her mother, "that the brother-in-law-elect had almost overturned her, the little sister-in-law-elect, in order to fly to his Louise."

Louise received Jacobi with more than customary cordiality; so did the whole family. What Jacobi had lost in worldly wealth he seemed to have won in the esteem and love of his friends, and it was the secret desire of all to indemnify him, as it were, for the loss of the parsonage. Jacobi on this subject had also his own peculiar views; and after he had refreshed himself with the food that he so much loved, which Louise served up to him in abundance, and after he had had a conference of probably three hours' length with her, the result of the same was laid before the parents, who looked on the new views thus opened to them, not without surprise and disquiet.

It was Jacobi's wish and intention now immediately to celebrate his marriage with Louise, and afterwards to go to Stockholm, where he thought of commencing a school for boys: To those who knew that all Jacobi's savings amounted to a very inconsiderable capital; that his yearly income was only fifty crowns; that he had displeased his only influential patron; that his bride brought him no dowry; and thus that he had nothing on which to calculate excepting his own ability to work—to all those then who knew thus much, this sudden establishment had some resemblance to one of those romances with their "*diner de mon cœur, et souper de mon âme*," which is considered in our days to be so infinitely insipid.

But Jacobi, who had already arranged and well considered his plans, laid them with decision and candour before the parents, and besought their consent that he might as soon as possible be able to call Louise his wife. Elise gasped for breath; the Judge made sundry objections, but for every one of these Jacobi had a reasonable and well-devised refutation.

"Are Jacobi's plans yours also, Louise?" asked the Judge, after a momentary silence; "are you both agreed?"

Louise and Jacobi extended a hand to each other; looked on each other and then on the father, with tearful yet with calm and assured eyes.

"You are no longer children," continued the father; "you know what you are undertaking. But have you well considered?"

Both assented that they had. Already, before there had been any expectation of the living, they had thought on this plan.

"It is a fatiguing life that you are stepping into," continued the Judge, seriously, "and not the least so for you, Louise. The result of your husband's undertaking will depend for the greatest part on you. Will you joyfully, and without complaint, endure what it will bring with it; will you, from your heart, take part in his day's work?"

"Yes, that I will!" replied Louise with entire and hearty confidence.

"And you, Jacobi," continued he, with unsteady voice, "will you be father and mother and sisters to her? Will you promise me that

she neither now, nor in the future, so far as in you lies, shall miss the paternal home?"

"God help me! so certainly as I will exert myself to effect it, she shall not!" answered Jacobi, with emotion, and gave his hand to the Judge.

"Go then, children," exclaimed he, "and ask the blessing of your mother—mine you shall have," and with tearful eyes he clasped them in his arms.

Elise followed the example of her husband. She felt now that Louise and Jacobi's firm devotion to each other; their willingness to work; and their characters, so excellent, and beyond this, so well suited to each other, were more secure pledges of happiness than the greatest worldly treasure. With respect to the time of the marriage, however, she made serious objections. All that the parents could give to their daughter was a tolerably handsome outfit, and this could not by any possibility be so speedily prepared. Louise took her mother's view of the question, and Jacobi saw himself, although reluctantly, compelled to agree that it should remain as at first arranged, namely, for the second day in Whitsuntide, which in this year fell at the end of May.

After this the betrothed hastened to the sisters to communicate to them the new views and schemes. There was many an Oh! and Ah! of astonishment; many a cordial embrace, and then, of course, what industry in the oak-leaf garland!

But as the mother at the usual time came in, she saw plainly that "the little lady" was somewhat impatient towards the brother-in-law-elect, and but little edified by his plans.

From that kind of sympathy which exists between minds, even when not a single word is spoken, especially between persons who are dear to each other, the dissatisfaction of Gabriele took possession also of the mother, who began to discover that Jacobi's plans were more and more idle and dangerous. Thus when Jacobi, not long afterwards, sought to have a *tête-à-tête* with her, in order to talk about his and Louise's plans, she could not help saying that the more she thought about the undertaking the more foolish did it appear to be.

To which Jacobi answered gaily, "Heaven is the guardian of all fools!"

Elise recollected at that moment how it had fared with a person with whom she was acquainted, who hoped for this guardianship in an undertaking that in most respects resembled Jacobi's, yet nothing had prevented all his affairs from going wrong altogether, and at length ending in bankruptcy and misery. Elise related this to Jacobi.

"Have you not read, mother," replied he, "a wise observation which stands at the end of a certain medical work?"

"No," said she; "what observation is it?"

"That what cured the shoemaker killed the tailor," said Jacobi.

Elise could not help laughing, and called him a conceited shoemaker. Jacobi laughed too, kissed Elise's hand, and then hastened to mingle in the group of young people, who assembled themselves round the tea table to see and to pass judgment on an extraordinary kind of tea-bread wherewith Louise would welcome

her bridegroom, and which, according to her opinion, besides the freshest freshness, was possessed of many wonderful qualities.

Whilst at tea, the mother whispered slyly into Louise's ear as Jacobi put sugar into his tea, "My dear child, there will be a deal of sugar used in your house—your husband will not be frugal."

Louise whispered back again, "But he will not grumble because too much sugar is used in the house. So let him take it then, let him take it!"

Both laughed.

Later in the evening, as the mother saw Jacobi dance the gallopade with Louise and Gabriele, whilst he made all happy with his joy, and his eyes beamed with life and goodness, she thought to herself—even virtue has her carelessness; and she was well satisfied with his plans.

One day Jacobi related the particulars of his audience with the excellence D., at P., to Louise and her mother; his relation was as follows:

"When I came up into the saloon the Bishop N. was coming backwards, with low bows, out of the chamber of his Excellence. Within a powerful voice was heard speaking polite and jocular words, and immediately afterwards his Excellence himself, with his foot wrapped in a woollen sock, accompanied the Bishop out. The lofty figure, clothed now in a dark green morning coat, seemed to me more imposing than ever. He swung a stick in his hand, upon which a grey parrot was sitting, which, while it strove to maintain its balance, screamed with all its might after the Bishop, 'Adieu to thee! adieu to thee!'

"The sunshine which was diffused over the expressive countenance of his Excellence as he came out of his room, vanished the moment he saw me (I had already informed him by letter of the use I had made of his goodness), and a severe repulsive glance was the only greeting which I received. When the Bishop at length, accompanied by the parting salutations of the parrot, had left, his Excellence motioned the servants out, and riveted upon me his strong, bright, grey eyes, and with an actually oppressive look inquired short and sharp, 'What want you, Sir?'

"I had never seen him behave thus to me before, and whilst I endeavoured to overcome a really choking sensation, I answered, 'I would thank you for the goodness which—'

"Which you have thrown away as if it were a very trifle," interrupted his Excellence. 'You must have a confounded many livings at command I think. You can perhaps throw such away on all sides.'

"He spoke these words in a hard ironical tone. I conjured him to hear me; and laid before him shortly, but with the utmost clearness, the reasons which had compelled me to give up the good fortune which his favour had procured for me. I concluded by saying, that the only consolation which I had for my loss, and the danger of having displeased my benefactor, was the feeling that I had done my duty and acted according to my conscience, and the persuasion that I had acted right.

"You have acted like a fool!" interrupted

his Excellence with violence, 'like a regular bedlamite have you behaved yourself! Things like this, sir, may do in romance, but in actual life they serve to no other purpose than to make their actors and all that belong to them beggars. But you have unpardonably compromised me! The thousand! you should have thought over all these things and these feelings before you had obtained my recommendation! Can I know of all supplicants with poverty, merits, and nine children! On your account in this business I have written letters; given dinners; made fine speeches; paid compliments in order to silence other claimants. I obtained for you that living, one of the best in the whole bishoprick, and now you have given it away as if it were a ——. It is really too bad! Don't come any more to me; and don't mix me up again in your concerns, that I say to you! I shall for the future meddle in nothing of the kind. Don't you ask me ever again for any thing!'

"I was wounded, but still more distressed than wounded, and said, 'The only thing which I shall ask from you, and shall ask for till I obtain it, is the forgiveness of your Excellence! My error in this affair was great; but after I had seen it, there was nothing for me to do but to retrieve it as well as lay in my power, and then to bear the consequences, even though they be as bitter as I now find them. Never again shall I make any claim to your goodness—you have already done more than enough for me. My intention is now to try if I cannot maintain myself by my own powers as teacher. I intend to establish a school for boys in Stockholm, whither I shall travel as soon as—'

"Attempt, and travel, and do whatever you like!" interrupted his Excellence, 'I don't trouble myself about it. I have occupied myself in your affairs for the last time! If I were to get for you ten livings, you would give all away the next moment, to the first, best poor devil that prayed you for them, with his full complement of wife and ten children!'

"Lundholm, wash me the glass! I never drink out of a glass from which a Bishop has drunk!"

"His Excellence had already turned his back upon me, and went again into his chamber cursing his gout, without the slightest parting word to me. The parrot, however, on the contrary turned itself about on the stick, and cried out with all his might, 'Adieu to thee! adieu to thee!'

"With this greeting, perhaps the last in the house of his Excellence, I retired; but not without, I must confess, stopping a few moments on the steps and wetting the stones with my tears. It was not the loss of a powerful patron which gave me so much pain, but—I had so admired this man, I had loved him with such an actual devotion; I looked up to him as to one of the noblest and most distinguished of men. He also seemed really to like me—at least I thought so, and now all at once he was so changed, so stern towards me, and as it seemed to me so unreasonable. It actually gave me pain to find so little that was noble in him, so little that was just! These were my feelings in those first bitter moments. When

I came to think over the whole event more calmly, I could almost believe that he had received beforehand an unjust representation of the whole affair, and that I encountered him while under its influence. Over and above, he had reason to be dissatisfied with the whole thing, and then just at that moment a fit of the gout seized him! I have written to him from this place, and I feel it impossible to give up the hope of seeing his sentiments mollified towards me."

Louise, however, did not think so favourably of his sentiments; thought Jacobi quite too indulgent, and was altogether irritated against his Excellence.

"It is quite the best not to trouble oneself about him," said she.

Jacobi smiled. "Poor Excellence!" said he.

CHAPTER XI.

A RELAPSE.

WHILST May wrote its romance in leaves and life; whilst Jacobi and Louise wrote many sweet chapters of theirs in kisses: whilst all in the house was in motion on account of the marriage, and joy and mirth sprang up to life like butterflies in the spring sun, one glance was ever darker, one cheek ever paler, and that was Eva's.

People say commonly that love is a game for the man, and a life's-business for the woman. If there be truth in this, it may arise from this cause, that practical life makes commonly too great a demand on the thoughts and activity of the man for him to have much time to spend on love, whilst on the contrary the woman is too much occupied with herself to have the power of withdrawing herself from the pangs of love (may the Chamberlain's lady forgive us talking so much about man and woman! It has not been our lot here in the world to scour either a room or a kettle, though, to speak the truth, we do not consider ourselves incapable of so doing).

Eva found nothing in her peaceful home which was powerful enough to abstract her from the thoughts and feelings which for so long had been the dearest to her heart. The warm breezes of spring, so full of love, fanned up that glimmering fire; so did also that innocent life of the betrothed, so full of cordiality and happiness; so did also a yet more poisonous wind. One piece of news which this spring brought was the betrothal of Major R. with one of the beauties of the capital, a former rival of Eva—news which caused a deep wound to her heart. She wished to conceal, she wished to veil what was yet remaining of a love which no one had favoured, and over which she could not now do other than blush; she had determined never again to burden and grieve her family with her weakness, her sorrows; she would not disturb the peace, the cheerfulness, which now again began to reign in the family, after the misfortunes which had shaken it, but under the endeavour to bear her burden alone, her not strong spirit gave way. She withdrew more and more from the family circle; became ever more silent and reserved, sought for solitude, and was unwilling to have her solitude disturbed by any

one. She even was reserved before Leonore, although she, like a good angel, stood by her side, resting her soft eyes upon her with a tender disquiet, endeavouring to remove from her every annoyance, taking upon herself every painful occupation, and evincing towards her all that anxious care which a mother shews to a sick child. Eva permitted all this, and was daily more and more consumed by her untold mental sufferings. The engrossing cares which at this time occupied the family, prevented almost every one from paying attention to Eva's state of mind, and thus she was often left to herself.

For several of the last evenings Eva had gone down into her own chamber directly after tea—for in their present dwelling some of the daughters occupied the ground-floor—and on the plea of headache had excused herself from again returning to her family during the evening. It was a principle of the parents never to make use of any other means of compulsion with their children, now that they were grown up, than love, be it in great things or in small. But then love had a great power in this family; and as the daughters knew that it was the highest delight of their father to see them all round him in an evening, it became a principle with them neither to let temper nor any other unnecessary cause keep them away. As now, however, this was the third evening on which Eva had been absent, the father became uneasy, and the mother went down to her, whilst the rest of the family and some friends who were with them were performing a little concert together. But Eva was not to be found in her chamber, and the mother was hastening back again, full of disquiet, when she met Ulla, who was going to make the beds.

"Where is Eva?" asked she, with apparent indifference.

Ulla started, was red and then pale, and answered hesitatingly, "She is—gone out—I fancy."

"Where is she gone?" asked Elise, suddenly uneasy.

"I fancy—to the grave of the young master," returned Ulla.

"To the grave!—so late! Has she gone there or several evenings?" inquired the mother.

"This is now the third evening," said Ulla: "Ah, best, gracious lady, it goes really to my heart—it is not justly right there!"

"What is not justly right, Ulla?"

"That Mamselle Eva goes out to the grave so late, and does not come back again till it has struck ten, and that she will be so much alone," returned Ulla. "Yesterday Mamselle Leonore even cried, and begged of her not to go, or to allow her to go with her. But Mamselle Eva would not let her, but said she would not go, and that Mamselle Leonore should go up stairs, and leave her alone; but as soon as Mamselle Leonore had left her she went out for all that, with only a thin kerchief over her head. And this evening she is gone out also. Ah! it must be a great grief which consumes her, for she gets paler every day!"

Greatly disturbed by what she had heard, Elise hastened to seek her husband. She found him deeply engaged over his books and papers, but he left all the moment he saw the troubled countenance of his wife. She related to him

what she had heard from Ulla, and informed him that it was her intention to go now immediately to the churchyard.

"I will go with you," said the Judge, "only tell Louise to defer supper for us till we come back; I fancy nobody will miss us, they are so occupied by their music."

No sooner said than done. The husband and wife went out together; it was half-past nine in the middle of May, but the air was cold, and a damp mist fell.

"Good heavens!" said the Judge softly, "she'll get her death of cold if she stops in the churchyard so late, and in air like this!"

As they approached the churchyard, they saw that a female form passed hastily through the gate. It was not Eva, for she sat on the grave of her brother; she sat there immovable upon the earth, and resembled a ghost. The churchyard was, with this exception, deserted. The figure which had entered before them, softly approached the grave, and remained standing at the distance of a few paces.

"Eva!" said a beseeching mournful voice; it was Leonore. The parents remained standing behind some thick-leaved fir-trees. On precisely the same spot had the father stood once before, and listened to a conversation of a very different kind.

"Eva!" repeated Leonore, with an expression of the most heartfelt tenderness.

"What do you want with me, Leonore?" asked Eva, impatiently, but without moving. "I have already prayed you to let me alone."

"Ah! I cannot leave you, dear Eva!" replied her sister, "why do you sit her on the ground, on this cold, wet evening. Oh, come home with me!"

"Do you go home, Leonore! this air is not proper for you! Go home to the happy, and be merry with them," returned Eva.

"Do you not remember," tenderly pleaded Leonore, "how I once, many years ago, was sick both in body and mind! Do you know who it was then that left the gay in order to comfort me! I prayed her to leave me—but she went not from me—neither will I now go away from you."

"Ah, go! leave me alone!" repeated Eva, "I stand now alone in the world!"

"Eva, you distress me!" said her sister, "you know that there is no one in this world that I love like you: I mourned so much when you left us—the house without you seemed empty, but I consoled myself with the thought that Eva will soon come back again. You came, and I was so joyful, for I believed that we should be so happy together. But I have seen since how little consequence I am to you! still I love you as much as ever, and if you think that I have not sympathized in your sorrows, that I have not wept with you and for you, you do me certainly injustice! Ah, Eva, many a night, when you have believed perhaps that I lay in sweet sleep, have I sat at your door, and listened how you wept, and have wept for you, and prayed for you, but I did not dare to come in to you because I imagined your heart to be closed to me!" And so saying, Leonore wept bitterly.

"You are right, Leonore," answered Eva, "much has become closed in me which once

was open. This feeling, this love for him—Oh, it has swallowed up my whole soul! For some time I believed I should be able to conquer it—but now I believe so no longer—"

"Do you repent of your renunciation?" asked Leonore; "it was so noble of you! Would you yet be united to him?"

"No, no! the time for that is gone by," said Eva. "I would rather die than that; but you see, Leonore, I loved him so—I have tasted love, and have felt how rapturous, how divine life might be!—Oh, Leonore, the bright sun-warm summer-day is not more unlike this misty evening hour, than the life which I lived for a season is unlike the future which now lies before me!"

"It seems so to you now, Eva—you think so now," answered her sister; "but let a little time pass over, and you will see that it will be quite otherwise; that the painful feelings will subside, and life will clear up itself before you. Think only how it has already afforded you pleasure to look up to heaven when the clouds separated themselves, and you said, 'see how bright it will be! how beautiful the heaven is!' and your blue eyes beamed with joy and peace, because it was so. Believe me, Eva, the good time will come again, in which you will thus look up to heaven, and feel thus joyful and thus gay!"

"Never!" exclaimed Eva, weeping; "Oh, never will that time return! Then I was innocent, and from that cause I saw heaven above me become clear—now so much that is bad, so much that is impure has stained my soul—stains it yet!—O Leonore, if you only knew all that I have felt for some time you would never love me again! Would you believe it that Louise's innocent happiness has infused bitterness into my soul; that the gaiety which has again begun to exist in the family has made me feel bitterness towards my own family—my own beloved ones! Oh, I could detest myself! I have chastised myself with the severest words—I have prayed with bitter tears, and yet—"

"Dear Eva, you must have patience with yourself," said Leonore, "you will not—"

"Ah, I am already weary of myself, of my life!" hastily interrupted Eva; "I am like some one who has already travelled far, who is already spent, but who must still go on, and can never come to his journey's end. It seems to me as if I should be a burden to all who belong to me; and when I have seen you all so happy, so gay one with another, I have felt my heart and my head burn with bitterness; then have I been obliged to go out—out into the cold evening dew, and I have longed to repose in the earth upon which it fell—I have longed to be able to hide myself from every one—deep, deep in the grave below!"

"But from me," said Leonore, "you will not be able to hide yourself; nor to go from me, since where you go there will I follow. Oh, what were life to me if you were to leave it in despair! You would not go alone to the grave, Eva. I would follow you there; and if you will not allow that I sit by your side, I will seat myself on the churchyard wall, that the same evening damps which penetrate you may penetrate me also; that the same night wind which chills your bosom may chill mine; that I may

be laid by your side and in the same grave with you. And willingly would I die for you, if— you will not live for me, and for the many who love you so much. We will try all things to make you happier. God will help us, and the day will come in which all the bitter things of this time will seem like a dream, and when all the great and beautiful feelings, and all the agreeable impressions of life will again revive in you. You will again become innocent—nay, become more, because virtue is a higher, a glorified innocence. O Eva, if he whose dust reposes beneath us, if his spirit invisibly float around us—if he who was better and purer than all of us, could make his voice audible to us at this moment, he would certainly join with me in the prayer—‘O Eva, live—live for those who love thee.’ Mortal life, with all its anguish and its joy, is soon past; and then it is so beautiful that our life should have caused joy to one another on earth; it causes joy in heaven. The great Comforter of all affliction will not turn from thee; only do not thou turn from Him! Have patience; tarry out your time. Peace comes, comes certainly—”

The words ceased; both sisters had clasped their arms round each other, and mingled their tears. Eva’s head rested on Leonore’s shoulder as she, after a long pause, spoke in a feeble voice:

“Say no more, Leonore; I will do what you wish. Take me; make of me what you will; I am too weak to sustain myself at this moment—support me; I will go with you; you are my good angel.”

Other guardian angels approached just then, and clasped the sisters in a tender embrace. Conducted by them, Eva returned home. She was altogether submissive and affectionate, and besought earnestly for forgiveness from all. She was very much excited by the scenes which had just occurred, drank a composing draught which her mother administered, and then listened to Leonore, who read to her, as she lay in bed, till she fell asleep.

The Judge paced up and down his chamber uneasily that night, and spoke thus to his wife, who lay in bed.

“A journey to the baths, and that in company with you, would be quite the best thing for her. But I don’t know how I can do without you; and more than that, where the money is to come from. We have had great losses, and see still great expenses before us: in the first place Louise’s marriage; and then, without a little money in hand, we cannot let our girls go from home; and the rebuilding of our house. But we must borrow more money; I see no other way. Eva must be saved, her mind must be enlivened and her body strengthened let it cost what it may. I must see and borrow—”

“It is not necessary, Ernst,” said Elise; and the Judge, making a sudden pause, gazed at her with astonishment; while she, half raising herself in bed, looked at him with a countenance beaming with joy. “Come,” continued she, “and I will recollect something to your memory which occurred fifteen years ago.”

“What sort of a history can that be?” said he, smiling gaily, while he seated himself on the bed, and took the hand which Elise extended to him.

“Five-and-twenty years ago,” began she.

“Five-and-twenty years!” interrupted he, “heaven help me, you promised to go no farther back than fifteen.”

“Patience, my love; this is part the first of my story. Do you not remember, then,” said she, “how, five-and-twenty years ago, at the commencement of our married life, you made plans for a journey into the beautiful native land of your mother! I see now, Ernst, that you remember it. And how we should wander there you planned, and enjoy our freedom and God’s lovely nature; you were so joyful in the prospect of this; but then came adversity, and cares, and children, and never-ending labour for you, so that our Norwegian journey retreated more and more into the background. Nevertheless, it remained like a point of light to you in the future; but now for some time you seem to have forgotten it; for you have given up all your own pleasures in labouring for your family; have forsaken all your own enjoyments, your own plans, for your own sphere of activity and your home. But I have not forgotten the Norwegian journey, and in fifteen years have obtained the means of its accomplishment.”

“In fifteen years! what do you mean!” asked he.

“Now I am arrived,” she answered, “at part the second of my history. Do you still remember, Ernst, that fifteen years ago we were not so happy as we are now! You have forgotten! Well, so much the better; I scarcely remember it myself any more, for the expansive rind of love has grown over the black scar. What I, however, know is, that at that time I was not so properly at home in actual life, and did not rightly understand all the good that it offered me, and that to console myself on that account I wrote a romance. But now it happened that by reason of my romance characters I neglected my duties to my lord and husband, for the gentlemen are decidedly unskilled in serving themselves—

“Very polite!” interposed the Judge, smiling.

“Be content!” continued she, “now it happened that one evening his tea and my romance came into collision—a horrible story followed. But I made a vow in my heart that one of these days the two rivals should become reconciled. Now you see my manuscript—you had the goodness to call it rubbish—I sent to a very enlightened man, a man of distinguished taste and judgment, and thus it befell, he found taste in the rubbish; and, what say you to it? paid me a pretty little sum for permission to bring it before the world. Do not look so grave, Ernst; I have never again taken up the pen to write romances; my own family has found me enough to do; and besides, I never again could wish to do anything which was not pleasant to you. You have displaced all rivals, do you see! But this one I decided should be the means of your taking the Norwegian journey. The little sum of two hundred crowns banco which it produced me have I placed in the savings’ bank for this purpose, and in fifteen years it has so much augmented itself that it will perfectly accomplish that object; and if ever the time for its employment will come, it is now. The desire for travelling is gone from me—I covet now only rest. But you and—”

"And you think," said the Judge, "that I shall take you—"

"O Ernst! why should you not?" exclaimed she; "if you could but know what joy the thought of this has prepared for me! The money, which from year to year increased, in order to give you pleasure, has been to me like a treasure of hidden delight, which has many a time strengthened and animated my soul! Make me only perfectly happy by allowing yourself to have enjoyment from it. Take it, my Ernst, and make yourself pleasure with it, this summer; I pray you to do so on account of our children. Take Eva with you, and if possible Leonore also. Nothing would refresh Eva's soul more than such a journey with you and Leonore in a magnificent and beautiful country. The money can be obtained in a month's time, and a few month's leave of absence cannot possibly be denied to one who has spent more than thirty years in incessant service for the state; and when Louise and her husband have left us, and spring and nature are in their very loveliest, then you shall set out; you shall be refreshed after so many years of painful labour, and the wounded heart of our sick child shall be healed."

CHAPTER XII.

PLANS AND COUNTER PLANS.

Eva entered her father's study the next morning. He immediately left his work, received her with the greatest tenderness, drew her to his side on the sofa, and placing one arm round her waist, took her hand in his and inquired, with a searching glance, "Do you want anything from me, my child? Can I do anything for you? Tell me!"

Encouraged by this kindness, Eva described the state of her mind to her father, and explained how she wished to commence an active life in order to overcome her weakness; and to regain strength and quiet. The situation of teacher in a girl's school in the city was vacant, and she wished immediately to take it, but only for the summer, during which time she and Leonore would prepare themselves to open a school in autumn. It was a plan of which they had long thought, and which would afford them a useful and independent life. Eva besought the acquiescence of her father to this proposition.

"Leonore and I," continued she, "have this morning talked a deal on the subject; we hope that with the counsel and countenance upon which we may reckon, to be able to make it succeed. Ah, father! I am become quite anxious about it on account of my own weakness. I must speedily resort to external means, that I may overcome it. I will become active; I will work; and while thus employed, I shall forget the past and myself, and only live for the happiness of those who love me, and to whom I have caused so much trouble."

"My child! my dear child, you are right; you do rightly!" said the father, deeply affected, and clasping his daughter in his arms; "your wish shall be granted, and whatever is in my power will I do to forward your plans. What a many institutions for education will

there not proceed from our house! But there is no harm at all in that—there are no more useful institutions on the face of the earth! One reservation, however, I must make from your and Leonore's determination. You may dedicate the autumn and winter to your school—but the summer you must devote to your father; and Madame B. may find a teacher where she can, only not from my family—for I am not now in a condition to find her one."

"Ah, father," said she, "every unemployed hour is a burden to me!"

"We will bear the burden together, my child," interrupted her father, "Leonore, I, and you, in our wanderings towards the west. In a few weeks I am thinking of undertaking a journey, after which I have longed for these many years; I will visit the beautiful native land of my mother; will you, Eva, breathe this fresh mountain air with me? I should have very little pleasure in the journey alone; but in company with you and Leonore it will make me young again! Our heads are become bowed, my child, but in God's beautiful nature we will lift them up again! You will go with me—is it not so? Good! Come then with me to your mother, for it is she alone who has managed this journey!"

With an arm round the waist of his daughter the Judge now went to his wife; they found Leonore with her; nor was ever a quartet of Mozart's more harmonious than that which was now performed among them.

Eva was uncommonly animated all day, but in the evening she was in a burning fever. A feeling of anxiety went through the whole family; they feared that a new grave was about to be opened, and disquiet was painted on all countenances. Eva, demanded, with a fervour, which was not without its feverish excitement, that the Assessor should be fetched. He came immediately.

"Forgive me!" exclaimed Eva, extending her hand to him, I have been so ungrateful to you! But my heart was so disordered that it was quite changed; but it will recover itself again. Leonore has given it health. I am very ill now; my hands burn, my head aches! Give me my little work-box—that I may hold it between my hands—that I may lean my head upon it—else I shall be no better! You, my friend, will cure me that I may again make my family happy!"

The Assessor dried his tears. As Eva leaned her head on the work-box, she talked earnestly, but not quite coherently, of the plans for the future.

"Very good, very good," said the physician, interrupting her; I too will be of the establishment; I will give instructions in botany to the whole swarm of girls, and between us we will drive them out into the woods and into the fields, that we may see them learn all that is beautiful in the world. But now, Eva, you must not talk any more—but you must empty this glass."

Eva took the composing draught willingly, and was soon calmer. She was the most obedient and amiable of patients, and showed a confidence in her old friend which penetrated his heart. He would have sat night and day by her bed.

Eva's sickness was a violent fever, which confined her to her bed for nearly three weeks, and occasioned her family great uneasiness. This sickness was, however, very beneficial for herself and for the health of her mind; but still more beneficial was the infinite love with which she saw herself encompassed on all sides.

One day in the beginning of her convalescence, as she sat up and saw herself surrounded by all the comforts which love and home could gather about a beloved sufferer, she said to Leonore as she leaned upon her, "Ah, who would not be willing to live when they see themselves so beloved."

In the mean time Louise's wedding-day was approaching nearer.

CHAPTER XIII.

A SURPRISE.

THREE days before the wedding a grand travelling-carriage drawn by four horses rolled through the streets of the city of X., and from the prodigious clatter which it made drew all the inhabitants to their windows.

"Did you see, dear sister," cried the general-shopkeeper Madame Saur to Madame Bask, the wife of the postmaster, "the grand travelling-carriage that has just gone by! Did you see the sweet youth that sat on the left and looked so genteel, with his snow-white neck and open shirt-collar! Lawk! how he looked at me—so sweet as he was! How like a real prince he looked!"

"Dear sister!" answered the postmistress, "then you did not see the gentleman who sat on the right! He was a grand gentleman, that I can positively assert! He sat so stately leaning back in the carriage, and so wrapped up in grand furs that one could not see the least bit of his face. Positively it was something grand!"

"I got a shimmer of the youth," said the grey-brown handed and visaged Annette P. as she glanced up from her coarse sewing, with such a look as probably a captive who has glanced out of his prison into a freer and more beautiful state of existence; "he looked so calm, with large blue eyes, out of the plate-glass windows of the carriage! as pure and grave he looked as one of God's angels!"

"Ay! we know to be sure how the angels look!" said the postmistress snubbingly, and with a severe glance at Annette; "but that's absolutely all one! Yet I should like to know what grantees they are. I should not be a bit surprised if it were his royal highness or gracious crown-prince, who with his eldest son is travelling *incondito* through the country."

"Dear sister says what is true," returned Madame Saur. "Yes it must be so! for he looked like a regular prince, the dear youth, as he sat there and glanced at me through the window; really, he smiled at me!"

"Nay, my ladies, we've got some genteel strangers in the city!" exclaimed Mr. Alderman Nyberg as he came into the room.

"Have they stopped here!" cried both ladies at once.

"My wife saw the carriage draw up and——"

"Nay, heaven defend us! Mr. Alderman

what are you thinking about that you don't make a stir in the city and send a deputation to wait upon them! For goodness sake let the city-council come together!"

"How! What! Who!" asked the Alderman, opening wide his grey eyes like some one just awoke out of sleep; "Can it indeed——"

"Yes, very likely his royal highness himself in his own proper person—possibly his majesty!"

"Gracious heavens!" said the Alderman, and looked as if the town-house had fallen.

"But speed off in all the world's name; and run and look about you, and don't stand here staring like a dead figure!" exclaimed the Postmistress quite hoarse, while she shook up and down her great mass of humanity on the creaking sofa. "Dear sister, cannot you also get on your legs a little, and Annette too, instead of sitting there humdrumming with her sewing, out of which nothing comes. Annette run quick, and see what it is all about—but come back in an instant-minute and tell me, poor soul, whom our Lord has smitten with calamity and sickness—nay, nay, march pancake!"

The alderman ran; dear sister Saur ran; Mamselle Annette ran; we ran also, dear reader, in order to see a large-made gentleman somewhat in years, and a youth of eleven, of slender figure and noble appearance, dismount from the travelling-carriage. It was Excellence D. and his youngest son.

They alighted and went into the house of the Franks. His Excellence entered the drawing-room without suffering himself to be announced, and introduced, himself to Elise, who though surprised by the visit of the unexpected stranger, received him with all her accustomed graceful self-possession; lamenting the absence of her husband, and thinking to herself that Jacobi had not in the least exceeded the truth in his description of the person of his Excellence.

His Excellence was now in the most brilliant of humours, and discovered, as by sudden revelation, that he and Elise were related; called her "my cousin" all the time, and said the handsomest things to her of her family, of whom he had heard so much, but more especially of a certain young man on whom he set the highest value. Further he said, that however much he must rejoice in having made the personal acquaintance of his cousin, still he must confess that his visit at this time had particular reference to the young man of whom he had spoken; and with this he inquired after Jacobi.

Jacobi was sent for and came quickly, but not without evident emotion in his countenance. Excellence D. approached him, extended his hand cheerfully, and said, "I rejoice to see you; my cursed gout has not quite left me; but I could not pass so near the city without going a little out of my way in order to wish you happiness on your approaching marriage, and also to mention an affair—but you must introduce me to your bride."

Jacobi did it with glowing eyes. His Excellence took Louise's hand, and said, "I congratulate you on your happiness, on being about to have one of the most estimable of men for your husband!" And with these words he riveted a friendly penetrating glance upon her, and then kissed her hand. Louise blushed deeply, and

looked happier than when she agreed to her own proposition of not troubling herself about his Excellence.

Upon the other daughters also who were present, his keen eyes were fixed with a look which seemed rather to search into soul than body, and rested with evident satisfaction on the beautifully blushing Gabriele.

"I also have had a daughter," said he slowly, "an only one—but she was taken from me!"

A melancholy feeling seemed to have gained possession of him, but he shook it quickly from him, stood up and went to Jacobi, to whom he talked in a loud and friendly voice.

"My best Jacobi," said he, "you told me the last time we were together that you thought of opening a school for boys at Stockholm. I am pleased with it, for I have proved that your ability as teacher and guide of youth is of no ordinary kind. I wish to introduce to you a pupil, my little boy. You will confer upon me a real pleasure if you will be able to receive him in two months, at which time I must undertake a journey abroad, which perhaps may detain me long, and would wish to know that during this my absence my son was in good hands. I wish that he should remain under your care at least two or three years. You will easily feel that I should not place in your hands him who is dearest to me in the world. If I had not the most perfect confidence in you, and therefore I give you no prescribed directions concerning him. And if prayers can obtain motherly regard," continued he, turning to Louise, "I would direct myself with them to you. Take good care of my boy—he has no longer a mother!"

Louise drew the boy hastily to her, embraced him and kissed him with warmth. A smile as of sunshine diffused itself over the countenance of the father, and certainly no words which Louise could have spoken would have satisfied him more than this silent but intelligent answer of the heart. Jacobi stood there with tears in his eyes; he could not bring forth many words, but his Excellence understood him, and shook him cordially by the hand.

"May we not have the horses taken out? Will not your Excellence have the goodness to stay to dine with us?" were the beseeching questions which were repeated around him.

But however willing his Excellence would have been to do it, it was impossible. He had promised to dine at Strö with Count Y., eighteen miles distant from the city.

"But breakfast! a little breakfast at least! It should be served in a moment. The young Count Axel would certainly be glad of a little breakfast!" asserted Louise with friendly confidence, who seemed already to have taken under her protection the future pupil of her husband.

The young Count Axel did not say no; and the father, whose behaviour became every moment more cordial and gay, said that a little breakfast in such company would eat excellently.

Bergström prepared with rapture and burning zeal the table for the lofty guest, who in the mean time chatted with evident satisfaction with Elise and Jacobi, directing often also his conversation to Louise, as if insensibly, to test her; and from their inmost hearts did both mother and bridegroom rejoice that with her

calm understanding she could stand the test so well.

Gabriele entertaining the young Count Axel, in one of the windows by listening to the repeater of his new gold watch, which set the grave and naturally silent boy at liberty to lead the entertainment in another way; and Gabriele, who entered into all his ideas, wondered very much over the wonderful properties of the watch, and let it repeat, over and over again, whilst her lovely and lively smiles, and her merry words, called forth more and more the confidence of the young Axel.

Breakfast was ready; was brought in by the happy Bergström; was eaten and praised by his Excellence, who was a connoisseur; a description of the capitally preserved anchovies was particularly desired from Louise; and then her health and that of her bridegroom were drunk in Madeira.

Towards the conclusion of the breakfast the Judge came home. The trait of independence, bordering on pride, which sometimes revealed itself in Judge Frank's demeanour, and perhaps at the very time of his respectful but simple greeting of his Excellence, called forth in him also a momentary glimpse of height. But this pride soon vanished from both sides. These two men knew and valued each other mutually, and it was not long before they were so deeply engrossed by conversation, that his Excellence forgot his journey, not for one only, but for two hours.

"I lament over Strö and its dinner" said his Excellence, preparing to take his departure; "how they must have waited there! But we could not possibly help it."

After his Excellence had departed, he left behind him a bright impression on all the family of Franks, not one of whom did not feel animated in a beneficial manner by his behaviour and his words. Jacobi in his joy made a high *entr'chat*, and embracing Louise said, "Now, Louise, what say you to the man? And we have got a pupil that will draw at least twenty after him!"

Louise was perfectly reconciled to his Excellence. From this day forth Bergström began a new era; whatever happened in the family was either before or after the visit of his Excellence.

"Ah, then, my goodness! that it should be Excellence D.!" said the dear sister Bask to the dear sister Saur.

"Yes, just think! That he should come solely, and for no other purpose, than to visit the Franks, and breakfast there, and stop several hours there! He is a-cousin of the Judge's lady."

"Her cousin? Bah! no more her cousin than I am the king's cousin, positively not!"

"Yes, yes! or why else should he have called her 'my gracious cousin?' And one must confess that there is something refined and genteel about her—and such hands as she has have I never seen!"

"Hum! There's no art in looking genteel and having beautiful hands, when one goes about the house like a foolish thing, washing one's hands in rose-water, and all the livelong day doing not one sensible act. That I know well enough!"

"Yes, yes! they who will be of any use in their house cannot keep such hands, and sit the whole day and read romances! I should like to know how it would have gone with the blessed Saur's baking business—to which at last he added the grocery—if I had been a genteel lady! Not at all, because I should not have done it. Dear sister, know that I once had my whims—yes, and a turn for scribbling and writing. Yes, so help me Heaven! if it had not been for my little bit of sound sense, which shewed me my folly in time, I might have become a regularly learned lady, another—what do you call her?—Madame de Stael! But when I married the late Saur I determined to give up all that foolishness, and do honour to the baking; and now I have quite let my little talent slip away from me, so that it is as good as buried. But on that account I am, to be sure, no fitting company for the Franks—think only!—and shall be only less and less so, if they are always climbing higher and higher."

"Let them climb as high as they will, I don't intend to make obeisances before them, that I can promise them! that I absolutely will not! It vexes me enough that Annette is so mad after them. Before one is aware of it, they will be taking her away from me, skin and hair; and that's my thanks for all I have lavished upon her! But I'll tell the gentry that I'm positively determined to make no compliments to them or to their Excellencies, and that one person is just as good as another! Positively I'll tell them that!"

CHAPTER XIV.

THE EVENING BEFORE THE WEDDING.

"God bless the little ones! But when one considers how little of a rarity children are in this world, one has only to open one's mouth to say so, and people are all up in arms and make such a stir and such an ado about their little ones! Heart's-dearest! People may call them angels as much as ever they will, but I would willingly have my knees free from them! But worst of all is it with the first child in a family! Oh, it is a happiness and a miracle, and cannot be enough overloaded with caresses and presents from father and mother, and aunts and cousins, all the world over. Does it scream and roar, then it is a budding genius; is it silent, then 'it is a philosopher, in its cradle: and scarcely is it eight days old but it understands Swedish, and almost German also. And—it bites, the sweet angel!—it has got a tooth! It bites properly. Ah, it is divine! Then comes the second child:—it is by far less wonderful already; its cry and its teeth are not half so extraordinary. The third comes:—it is all over with miracles now! the aunts begin to shake their heads and say, "no lack of heirs in the house! Nay, nay! may there be only enough to feed them all. After this comes a fourth, and a fifth, and a sixth—yes, then people's wits are set in full play! The parents resign themselves, but the friends defend themselves! Heart's-dearest, what is to become of it? The house full of children, a whole half dozen! Poor Mrs. This and This—it makes one quite weak both in body and mind only to think of it! Yes,

yes, my friends, people don't put these things down in romances, but it goes on in this way in real life! Yes!"

It was the Chamberlain's lady who preached this little sermon, in the zeal of her spirit, to the young couple who the next day were to be man and wife. She ate on this evening Whitesuntide-porridge* with the Franks, and all the while gave sundry lessons for the future. Jacobi laughed heartily over the history of the children, and endeavoured to catch Louise's eye; but this was fixed upon the Postillion, which she was arranging with a very important and grave aspect. The Judge and Elise looked smilingly on each other, and extended to each other their hands.

The state of feeling in the family, for the rest of the evening, was quite rose-coloured. Letters had been received from Petrea which gave contentment to all her friends, and Eva sate in the family circle with returning, although as yet, pale roses on her cheeks. The Judge sate between Eva and Leonore, laying out on the map the plan of the summer tour. They would visit Thistedalen, Ringerfjet, and Thellemarken, and would go through Trondheim to Norrland, where people go to salute the midnight sun.

Gabriele looked after her flowers, and watered the myrtle tree from which next morning she would break off sprays wherewith to weave a crown and garland for Louise. Jacobi sate near the mother, and seemed to have much to say to her; what it was, however, nobody heard, but he often conveyed her hand to his lips, and seemed as if he were thanking her for his life's happiness. He looked gentle and happy. Every thing was prepared for the morrow, so that this evening would be spent in quiet.

According to Jacobi's wish the marriage was to take place in the church, and after this they were all to dine *en famille*. In the evening, however, a large company was to be assembled in the S. saloon, which with its adjoining garden had been hired for the purpose. This was according to the wish of the father, who desired that for the last time, perhaps for many years, his daughter should collect around her, all her acquaintance and friends, and thus should show to them, at the same time, welcome politeness. He himself, with the help of Jacobi and Leonore, who was everybody's assistant, had taken upon himself the arrangement of this evening's festival, that his wife might not be fatigued and disturbed by it.

At supper the betrothed sat side by side, and Jacobi behaved sometimes as if he would purposely seize upon his bride's plate as well as his own, which gave rise to many dignified looks, to setting-to-rights again, and a deal of merriment besides.

Later in the evening, when they all went to rest, Louise found her toilette-table covered with presents from bridegroom, parents, sisters, and friends. A great deal of work was from Petrea. These gifts awakened in Louise mingled feelings of joy and pain, and as she hastened yet once again to embrace the beloved ones from whom she was about so soon to separate,

* There is some new kind of porridge for almost every week in the year in Sweden, with which the table is most religiously served.

many mutual tears were shed. But evening dew is prophetic of a bright morrow—that was the case here.

CHAPTER XV.

THE WEDDING-DAY.

THE sun shone bright and warm on that morning of Whit-Monday. Flowers and leaves glistened in the morning dew; the birds sang; the bells of the city rang festively and gaily; the myrtle-crown was ready woven early, and the mother and Leonore were present at the toilette of the bride. They expected that Jacobi would make his appearance in the highest state of elegance, and hoped that his appearance would not dim that of the bride. Louise's sisters made her appearance on this occasion of more importance than she herself did. Gabriele dressed her hair—she possessed an actual talent for this art—half-blown rose-buds were placed in the myrtle wreath; and what with one, and what with another little innocent art of the toilette, a most happy effect was produced. Louise looked particularly well in her simple, tasteful, bridal dress—for the greatest part, the work of her own skilful hands—and the content, and the beautiful repose which diffused itself over her countenance, spread a glorification over all.

"You look so pale to-day in your white dress, my little Eva," said Leonore, as she helped her to dress—"you must have something pink on your neck, else our bride will be anxious when she sees you."

"As you will, Leonore! I can put this handkerchief on, that it may give a little reflected colour to my cheek. I will not distress any one."

When the festally-arrayed family assembled for breakfast they presented a beautiful appearance. The family father, however, looked more gloomy than gay; and as Jacobi entered they saw, with astonishment, that his toilette was considerably negligent. He had been out; his hair was in disorder, and he evidently was in an excited state of mind; but he was handsome for all that. He kissed his bride tenderly on hand and lips, and gave her a nosegay of beautiful wild-flowers, and several splendidly bound books,—the sermons of Franzen and Wallin, which gift was very valuable, and was received by "our sensible" and sermon-loving Louise with the greatest pleasure.

After breakfast Jacobi hastened to arrange his toilette, and then they all went to church. The weather was uncommonly beautiful, and crowds of festally-dressed people thronged about, in part to hear the Provost, who was to preach that day, but principally to see the bridal pair.

It was an agreeable surprise to the family when at the entrance of the churchyard many young girls began to strew flowers before the bridal couple the whole way to the church-door. The church also was decorated with flowers and foliage.

When the Judge took the hand of his daughter in the church, she perceived that his was cold, and that it trembled. She looked at him, and read in his countenance the disquiet with which his soul laboured.

"My father," said she to him, "I feel so calm, so happy!"

"Then I am so too, my child," said he, pressing her hand, and after this moment his demeanor was calm and decided as usual.

Jacobi both before and after the ceremony was excited in the highest degree; he wept much. Louise, on the contrary, was externally quite calm. She looked rather pale but her eyes were bright and almost joyous; an altogether unusual contrast in a bridal pair.

On their return from the church a little circumstance occurred which gave pleasure to all, but more especially to the Judge. As they went past the remains of the burnt-down house, they saw a great swarm of bees suddenly mount up from the trees of the garden; it flew several times round the market-place as if seeking for a habitation, and at last turning back, struck directly down among the ruins of the former kitchen fire-place; it seemed as if it had selected the hearth for its abiding home. This was regarded as the happiest omen, and no sooner had the Judge conducted his daughter home, than he returned in order to remove his bees to a convenient resting-place; Gabriele following him with a treatise on the management of bees in her hand.

When Louise was again locked in the arms of her mother—the mother and Eva had remained at home—she was seized by a slight trembling fit which lasted several hours, but which was unobserved by all except her mother; and through the whole of the day she continued graver than common. Jacobi on the contrary, after his fit of weeping was over, and he had embraced everybody, and kissed his bride on lips, hair, hand, and foot, was seized with a real desire of dancing with the whole world. He was so wildly joyous and happy, and at the same time so amiable, that he imparted his state of mind to everybody else.

At half-past four in the afternoon they assembled themselves in the garden, where the time was passed in the most agreeable manner, with music, walking about, entertainment and eating of ices and fruit, to which also the Almighty added the brightest heaven and the calmest air. Later in the evening they danced in the great saloon; no lady could sit still, and scarcely a gentleman stand; all must dance! When the company wished to go across the garden to the eating-room, they perceived that it had rained considerably, and that it still dropped; this occasioned a great commotion among the ladies, because all the wrapping shawls and cloaks were on the other side; they had quite forgotten to bring them over in the fine weather. But it was, according to popular belief in Sweden, fortunate that rain-drops should fall on the crown of the bride—but at the same time it was also against all sense of prudence and propriety that she should wet her shoes. And then all the other ladies! They must have the wrapping things fetched to this side!

"I will provide for it!" said Jacobi, and with these words seized his astonished bride in his arms and carried her across the garden. What he whispered in her ear during this journey we know not, but this far we can say, that this action set Jacobi very high in the favour of the ladies.

The new-married pair spent several days after the wedding under the paternal roof, and joyful days they were, only rather too much given up to dissipation, for all friends and acquaintance would see and entertain the two young people. Mrs. Gunilla gave them a dinner, in which she communicated to them that she should, at the same time with them, journey to Stockholm, where important affairs would oblige her to stay a considerable time. However much it grieved Elise to lose so excellent and almost motherly a friend, she rejoiced very much over what Louise and Jacobi would win thereby. Louise and Mrs. Gunilla, it is true, had not perfectly harmonized together, because each would instruct the other; but Jacobi and she agreed all the better, and she had already invited the young people to dine with her as often as they would in Stockholm.

In the hour of parting she spoke thus to Elise and her husband with tears in her eyes: "Who knows when we may meet again? The old woman is in years—is not of much more use in the world—na, na! God will care for her as he has hitherto done! And listen," continued she with an arch, roguish air, "don't be uneasy on account of the young folks; I shall see that it all goes on right there. I invite myself as sponsor to the first child. Perhaps we shall meet then! Yes, yes, I have a presentiment that we shall see one another again in Stockholm! Nay! now farewell, dear Elise! God bless you, my kind friend, and make all go well with you! Think of the old woman sometimes! Adieu!"

After the trouble of the packing was over—we mean packing Louise's things, of course—and the still sorrow of parting, quiet returned back into the house, and was only agreeably interrupted by preparations for the journey to the West. The Judge seemed at this time to be young again, and an increased union of heart shewed itself between him and his wife. So wear away, sometimes, the most beautiful summer days, even after the autumn has made advances into the year. From what cause, is this? God knows.

The invisible genius of our history leads us at this moment far from the home of peace to a distant shore, in order to give us a glimpse into the subject of our next chapter

CHAPTER XVI.

A SICK CHAMBER.

If the sun shine on the head of the crucified, if a bird lifts up its joyous song in presence of a broken heart, it seems to us cruel. But beautiful is the unconscious irony of nature in comparison with that which exists in human circumstances. We have here an example of this before us. See these sparkling false diamonds, this red gauze finery, these ruins of theatrical ornament. They seem to mock the misery of the room about which they are strewn. In that wretched room is want of light; want, not only of all the comforts of life, but also of its most necessary things. And yet—where could they be more useful than here?

Forlorn, upon a miserable bed, lay a woman, who appeared to have seen better days; still is

she handsome, although passion and suffering seem early to have wasted her yet young countenance. Fever burned on the sunken cheek and in the dark eye, and her lips moved themselves wildly; but no one was there to refresh with friendly hand the dry lips and the hot brow: no cooling fever-draught stood near her bed. Two new-born babes lay weeping near the mother. Uneasy phantoms seemed to agitate the unhappy one: sometimes she raised herself in the bed with gestures, but sunk back again powerless; whilst her pale convulsed, and wandering lips spoke from the depths of her torn heart the following incoherent words:

"It is a bitter, bitter path! but I must, must fly for help! My strength is broken—I can do nothing—the children cry to be heard, hungry, half-naked! Parents! sisters! help!"

"It is night—the wind is cold—I freeze! The waves swell and swell—they drive a wreck ashore—they strike on the rocks—ah! wherefore did it not go down in the storm on the open sea? And thou, thou who art the cause of all, thou sittest by and lookest coldly on me! Miserable egotist! Dost thou bear a heart in thy breast? The temple is dashed to pieces, and thou that hast ruined, treadest upon its ruins!

"Hush! is it she? Is it my foster-mother which comes here so soft and low? It becomes bright! She will lay her warm hands on my little children, and wrap them in the warm coverlet—

*There sits a dove so fair and white
All on the lily spray.*

Is it she? No! it is the moon, which rises palely out of black clouds. How coldly she looks on my misery! Away, away!

"Sisters, I thirst! Will no one give me a drop of water? Have you all, all left me? It is so strange in my head. Perhaps I shall become mad if I thirst much longer. It is dark—I am afraid! I am afraid of the dark bird! If it come again it will begin to rend my heart; but if I am ever again strong I will kill it—with my own hands will I murder it! Day and night a wick burns in my heart; its name is Hate, and the oil that supplies it is bitterness!

"When shall I be strong again? Do you see how he has raised me; has fettered me to the sick-bed? Do you hear the children cry?—the children which, through the abuse of the father, have come into the world before their time, and now will die? Give nourishment to the children, for the mercy of God, sisters! Let me die, but help the children!

"Help me up, I must dress myself! Here, with my handsome attire! haste! To-night I must appear anew before the public, and be admired; must hear the clapping of hands and bravos; must see garlands showered before my feet! See you, sisters; it is so glorious! It is a real burst of joy! See how I glitter—how I beam forth! Listen to the tempest of applause! How it thunders! But wherefore is it again silent? wherefore is it now again so still?—still and dark as the grave? It was a short joy!

"Do not look so sternly upon me, foster-father! Your stern look penetrates me. Give me your hand, that I may lay it on my burning brow. You turn from me! You go! Oh!

"I will not die! I am so young, have so much strength of life in my soul!"

"Who saves me? There come foaming waves!—or are they your white arms, sisters, which you stretch out towards me? Do you see what I see, like gray misty ghosts wandering on the corpse coast? Do you hear the noise? It is death—it is the dark bird which comes!—now I must fly—fly—or die!"

With a violent effort the delirious woman rose from the bed—took a few steps, and then fell down as if lifeless. Her head struck against the bedstead, and a stream of blood rushed forth.

At this moment a tall man habited in black entered the room softly; light looks surrounded the noble but somewhat aged head; the mild, serious expression of the countenance, and the affectionate look of the blue eyes shewed, still more than the dress, whose servant he was. A lady, who was not handsome, but whose countenance bore the stamp of beauty of the soul, like her husband's, followed him. With a look of the deepest compassion this couple surveyed the room, and then drew near the sick-bed.

"Merciful heaven!" whispered they, "we are come too late! The children are dead—and so is the mother!"

Let us now turn our eyes away from this dark picture that they may rest upon a brighter one.

CHAPTER XVII.

A LANDSCAPE.

ON one of the heights of the Bofrine Mountains we see three travellers—an elderly man and two young ladies. He seemed neither afraid of trouble for himself nor for them; he seemed as if he were accustomed to it and could play with it. But he does all so affectionately; he goes before them so friendly and kind, reaches out his hand and encourages them to yet another effort, and they would then enjoy the magnificent view; they would then be able to rest, and would get refreshment at the mountain hut above them! The daughters follow him smiling, and overcome weakness and weariness for his sake! Now they are above on the heights—and well are they rewarded for all the labour of climbing up there! The earth lies below so rich, with its hills and valleys, dark woods, fruitful plains—and there, in the far distance, sea and heaven unite themselves in majestic repose!

With an exclamation of rapture the father extended his arms towards the magnificent prospect; and the mountain wind—not keen here, but mild from the breath of spring, agreeably cooled the cheeks of the wanderers.

The father went to the hut to obtain milk for himself and his daughters, and in the mean time one of the daughters rested upon a moss-covered stone and supported herself against a rock. Almond-scented Linnea formed a garland around her feet, and the joyous singing-birds ascended from the valley. The sister who stood near her and against whom she leaned her lovely head, whilst the wind played in her brown tresses, looked on the comfortable dwellings which gleamed forth below from amid green trees and beside clear waters and her affectionate but un-

impassioned heart rejoiced itself over the scene which seemed to say to her, "Here may one live calmly and happily!" At that moment she heard her name spoken by a loving voice; it was Eva's, who, while she pointed with hand and eye towards heaven, when the clouds began to divide themselves, and stripes of blue light gleamed forth like friendly eyes, "Seest thou, Leonore," said she, gently smiling, "it will be bright!"

"Will it be bright? Ah, thank God!" whispered Leonore in reply, with eyes full of joyful tears, as she laid her cheek against the brow of her sister.

CHAPTER XVIII.

UPS AND DOWNS.

WHEN a new swarm is ready in a hive to attempt its own flight, warning voices may be heard on still evenings in the little state, calling forth, "Out! out!"

People have interpreted it to be the old queen bee, which thus warns the young ones forth into the world to fashion their own kingdom. I should rather imagine it to be the young ones who in this manner sing forth their longing. But let it be with them as it may, certain it is that in the human hive, home, a similar cry sometimes makes itself heard. Then also there, when the young swarm is become strong with the honey and wax of home, it finds the house too narrow and longs to get abroad. This is common to all homes; but it is peculiar to the good and happy home, that the same voice which exclaims, "Out! out!" exclaims afterwards yet more animatedly, "In! in!"

So was it in the home of the Franks.

The period to which we must now cast our eyes conducts us several years beyond the time when we saw father and daughters on the heights of the Dofrine Mountains, and shews us our Petrea returned home after a long absence.

The mother, Petrea, and Gabriele, a few days in a conversation which appears to inter them all three in a very lively manner, and the mild voice of the mother is heard saying—

"You may freely decide for yourself, my good child, that you know perfectly well; but as you describe Mr. M., and with the feelings, or more properly speaking the want of feeling which you have for him, I can never believe that you will be happy with him, and I cannot therefore advise this marriage. See, here are some almonds in the shell, my dear girl! We have not forgotten so soon your love for them—I set the basket before you!"

"And the Countess Solstrale," said the lively Gabriele archly, "has herself spoken for her nephew, and invited you to her house. Very polite and handsome of her! And you, Petrea, no longer covet this exaltation?"

"Ah, no, Gabriele!" answered Petrea, "this childish desire is long past; it is another kind of exaltation than this that I pine for."

"And this is called?" asked Gabriele, with a light in her lovely eyes which shewed that she very well knew what, however she had not pronounced in words.

"I do not know what I should call it; but there lives and moves here a longing difficult to describe," said Petrea, laying her hand upon her breast, and with eyes full of tears, "Oh, if

could only rise upwards to light—to a higher, freer life!"

"You do not wish to die!" said Gabriele warmly, "not that I now fear death. Since Henrik has trod this path, I feel so entirely different to what I used to do. Heaven is come quite near to the grave. To die is to me to go to him, and to his home. But I am yet so happy to be living here with my family, and you, my Petrea, must feel so too. Ah! life on earth with those that we love may indeed be so beautiful!"

"So I think, and so I feel, Gabriele," replied Petrea, "and more so than ever when I am at home, and with my own family. On that account I will gladly live on the earth, at least till I am more perfect. But I must have a sense of this life having in it a certain activity, by which I may arrive at the consciousness of that which lives within me—there moves in me a fettered spirit, which longs after freedom!"

"Extraordinary!" said Gabriele, half displeased, "how unlike people are one to another. I, for my part, feel not the least desire for activity. I, unworthy mortal, would much rather do nothing!" and so saying she leaned her pretty head with half-shut eyes against her mother, who looked on her with an expression that seemed to say, "Live only; that is enough for thee!"

Petrea continued: "When I have read or heard of people who have lived and laboured for some great object, for some development of human nature, who have dedicated all their thoughts and powers to this purpose, and have been able to suffer and to die for it; oh! then I have wept for burning desire that it also might be granted to me to spend and to sacrifice my life. I have looked around me, have listened after such an occasion, have waited and called upon it; but ah! the world goes past me on its own way—nobody and nothing has need of me."

Petrea both wept and laughed as she spoke, and with smiles and tears also did both Gabriele and the mother listen to her; and she continued—

"As there was now an opportunity for my marrying, I thought that here was sphere in which I might be active—But ah! I feel clearly that it is not the right one for me, neither is it the one for which I am suitable—especially with a husband whose tastes and feelings are so different to mine."

"But, my good girl," said the mother, disconcerted, "how came it, then, that he could imagine you sympathised so well together; it seems from his letter that he makes himself quite sure of your consent."

"Ah!" replied Petrea, blushing, and not without embarrassment, "there was reason for that, and it was partly his fault and partly mine. In the country where I met him, he was quite left to himself; nobody troubled themselves about him; he had ennui, and for that reason I began to find pleasure for him."

"Very noble," said Gabriele, smiling.

"Not quite so much so as you think," replied Petrea, again blushing, "because—at first I wished really to find pleasure for him, and then also a little for myself. Yes, the truth is this, that I—had nothing to do, and while I busied myself about Mr. M., I did not think it so very much amiss to busy him a little about me; and for this reason I entered into his amusements, and turned upon all sorts of petty, social title-

tattle; for this reason I preserved apricots for him, and sang to him in an evening, 'Welcome, O Moon!' and let him think if he would that he was the moon. Mother, Gabriele, forgive me, I know how little edification there is in all this, it is quite too—but you cannot believe how dangerous it is to be idle, when one has an active spirit within one, and an object before one that—You laugh! nay, the affair is not worth anything more, for it is anything but tragic—yet it might become so, if on account of any of my sins I were to punish myself by marrying Mr. M. I should be of no worth for him, excepting as housekeeper and plaything, and this would not succeed in the long run; for the rest he does not love me—cannot love me seriously, and would certainly easily console himself for my refusal."

"Then let him console himself, and do not think any farther on the affair!" cried Gabriele, with animation.

"I am of Gabriele's opinion," said the mother, "for to marry merely to be married; merely to obtain a settlement, an establishment, and all that, is wrong; and moreover with your family relationships the most unnecessary thing in the world. You know, my dear child, that we have enough for ourselves and for you, and a sphere of action suitable for you will present itself in time. Your father will soon return home, and then we can talk with him on the subject. He will assist us directly in the best way."

"I had, indeed, presentiments," said Petrea with a sigh, "and hopes, and dreams perhaps—of a way, of an activity which would have made me useful and happy according to my own abilities. I make now much humbler demands on life than formerly; I have much less opinion of myself than I had—but oh! if I might only ally myself, as the least atom of light, to the beams which penetrate humanity at the same time that they animate the soul of man, I would thank God and esteem myself happy! I have made an attempt—you know, mother and Gabriele—to express in a book somewhat of that which has lived in me and which still lives; you know that I have sent the manuscript to an enlightened printer for his judgment, and also—if his judgment be favourable—that he should publish it. If this should succeed, if a sphere of action should open itself to me in this way, oh! then some time or other I might become a more useful and happy being, should give pleasure to my connexions, and ———"

Petrea was here interrupted by the arrival of a large packet directed to herself. A shuddering apprehension went through her; her heart beat violently as she broke the seal, and—recognised her own manuscripts. The enlightened, intelligent printer sent them back to her, accompanied by a little note, containing the unpleasant tidings that he would not offer the merest trifle for the book, neither could he undertake the printing of it at his own cost.

"Then this path is also closed against me!" said Petrea, bowing her head to her hand that nobody might see how deeply she felt this. Thus then she had deceived herself regarding her talents and her ability. But now that this way also was closed against her—what should she undertake? Marriage with Mr. M. began again to haunt her brain. She stumbled about in the dark.

Gabriele would not allow, however, that the path of literature was closed against her; she was extremely excited against the printer. "He was certainly," she said, "a man without taste."

"Ah!" said Petrea, readily smiling, "I also will gladly flatter myself with that belief, and that if the book could only be printed, then we soon—but that is not to be thought of!"

Gabriele thought it was quite worth while to think about it, and did not doubt but that means might be found, some time or other, to make the gentleman printer make a long face about it one of these days.

The mother agreed; spoke of the return of her husband, who she said would set all right: "keep only quietly with us, Petrea, calmly, and don't be uneasy about the means for bringing out your book; they will be found without difficulty, if we only give ourselves time."

"And here," added Gabriele, "you shall have as much quiet as you desire. If you would like to spend the whole day in reading and writing, I will take care that nobody disturbs you. I will attend to all your friends and acquaintance, if it be needful, to insure your quiet. I will only come in to you to tell you when breakfast is ready and when dinner; and on the post-day, I'll only come at the post hour and knock at your door, and take your letters and send them off. And in the evening then—then we may see you amongst us—you cannot believe how welcome you will be! Ah! certainly you will feel yourself happy among those who love you so much! And your book! we will send it out into the world, and it too shall succeed!"

Loving voices! domestic voices in happy families, what adversity, what suffering is there which cannot be comforted by you!

Petrea felt their healing balsam. She wept tears of love and gratitude. An hour afterwards, much calmer in mind, she stood at the window, and noticed the scene without. Christmas was at hand, and every thing was in lively motion, in order to celebrate the beautiful festival joyously. The shops were ornamented, and people made purchases. A little bird came and sat on the window, looked up to Petrea, twittered joyfully, and flew away. A lively sentiment passed through Petrea's heart.

"Thou art happy, little bird," thought she; "so many beings are happy. My mishap grieves no one, hurts no one. Wherefore, then, should it depress me? The world is large, and its Creator rich and good. If this path will not succeed for me, what then? I will find out another."

In the evening she was cheerful with her family. But when night came, and she was alone; when the external world presented no longer its changing pictures; when loving, sweet voices no more allured her out of herself—then anguish and disquiet returned to her breast. In no condition to sleep, and urged by irresistible curiosity, she sat herself down sighingly to go through her unlucky manuscripts. She found many pencil-marks, notes of interrogation, and traces of the thumb on the margin, which plainly proved that the reader had gone through the manuscript with a censorious hand, and had had satisfaction in passing his judgment of "good for nothing!"

Ah! Petrea had built so many plans for herself and her family upon this, which was now good for nothing; had founded upon it so many hopes for her ascent upwards. Was nothing now to come out of them all?

Petrea read; she acknowledged the justice of many marginal marks, but she found, more and more, that the greater part of them had reference to single expressions, and other trifles. Petrea read and read, and was involuntarily captivated

by that which she read. Her heart swelled, her eyes glowed, and suddenly animated by that feeling which (we say it *sans comparaison*) gave courage to Correggio, and which comforted Galileo, she raised herself, and struck her hand upon the manuscript with the exclamation, "It is good for something after all!"

Animated to the depths of her heart, she ran to Gabriele, and laughing, embraced her with the words "You shall see that one of these days I'll ascend upwards yet."

PART III.

CHAPTER I.

PETREA TO IDA.

From my Hermitage in the Garret.

"ILLUSIONS! Illusions!" you cry over all joys, all faith, all love in life. I shout back with all my might over your own words, 'Illusions! Illusions!' All depends upon what we fix our faith and our affections. Must the beauty of love and worth of life be at an end to woman when her first spring, her bloom of love, her moments of romance, are past? No, do not believe that, Ida. Nothing in this world is such an illusion as this belief. 'Life is rich; its tree blossoms eternally, because it is nourished by immortal fountains. It bears dissimilar fruits, various in colour and glory, but all beautiful; let us undervalue none of them, for all of them are capable of producing plants of eternal life.'

"Youthful love—the beaming passion-flower of earth! Who will belie its captivating beauty, who will not thank the Creator that he gave it to the children of earth? But ah! I will exclaim to all those who drink of its nectar, and to those who must do without it—'There are flowers which are as noble as this, and which are less in danger than it of being paled by the frosts of the earth—flowers from whose chalices also you may suck life from the life of the Eternal!'

"Ah! if we only understood how near to us Providence has placed the fountains of our happiness—if we had only understood this from the days of our childhood upwards, acted upon it, and profited by it, our lives would then seldom lead through dry wildernesses! Happy are those children whose eyes are early opened by parents and home to the rich activity of life. They will then experience what sweetness and joy and peace can flow out of family relationships, of the heart-felt union between brothers and sisters, between parents and children; and they will experience how these relations, carefully cherished in youth, will become blessings for our maturer years.

"You pray me to speak of my home and my family. But when I begin with this subject, who can say, Ida, whether I shall know how to leave off! This subject is so rich to me, so dear—and yet how weak will not my description be, how lifeless in comparison with the reality!

"The dwelling-house—which may be said to have the same relation to home as the body has to the soul—arisen now out of its ashes, stands on the same place on which, twelve years ago, it was burnt down. I wish you had been with

me yesterday in the library at breakfast. It was Leonore's birth-day, and the family had occasioned her a surprise by a little gift which was exactly according to her taste—ornament combined with convenience. It was an insignificant gift—wherefore then did it give us all so much pleasure! wherefore were there sweet tears in her pious eyes, and in ours also! We were all so still, and yet we felt that we were very happy—happy because we mutually loved one another, and mutually pleased one another so much. The sun shone at that time into the room—and see, Ida! this sunbeam which shines day by day into the house is the best image of its state; it is that which chases hence all darkness, and turns all shadows into the glorification of its light!

"I will now, lively Ida, talk to you some little about the daughters of the house, and in order that you may not find my picture too sentimental, I will introduce first to you, 'Honour to whom honour is due!'

'OUR ELDEST,'

Well known for industry, morality, moral lecturing, cathedral airs, and many good properties. She married eleven years ago upon a much smaller than common capital of worldly wealth; but both she and her husband knew how to turn their pound to account, and so, by degrees, their house, under her careful hands, came to be what people call a well-to-do house.

Eight wild Jacobis during this time sprung up in the house without bringing about any revolution in it, so good were the morals which they drew in with the mother's milk. I call them the 'Berserkers,' because when I last saw them they were perfect little monsters of strength and swiftness, and because we shall rely upon their prowess to overturn certain planks—of which more anon—on which account I will inspire them and their mother beforehand with a certain old gothic ambition.

"So now! After the married couple had kept school eleven years, he instructing the boys in history, Latin, and such like, and she washing, combing, and moralizing the same, and, in fact, becoming a mother to many a motherless boy, it pleased the mercy of the Almighty to call them—not directly to heaven, but through his angel the Consistorium to the pastoral care of the rural parish adjoining this city—the highest goal of their wishes ever since they began to have wishes one with another. Their approaching journey here has given rise to great pleasure—it is hard to say in which of the two families the greatest. Thus then Louise will become a pastor's wife—perhaps soon also a provost's, and then she arrives at the desired situation in which she can impart moral lectures with power—of which sister Petrea might have the benefit of a good part, and pay it back with interest.

"But the moral lectures of our eldest have a much milder spirit than formerly, which is owing to the influence of Jacobi; for it has occurred in their case, as in the case of many another happily-married couple, they have ennobled one another; and it is a common saying in our family, that she without him would not have become what she now is, neither would he have been without her what he now is.

"The Rose of the Family, the daughter Eva, had once in her life a great sorrow—a bitter conflict; but she came forth victorious. True it is that an angel stood by her side and assisted her. Since then she has lived for the joy of her family and her friends, beautiful and amiable and happy, and has from time to time rejected lovers. I said that an angel stood beside her in the bitter conflict. There was a time when this angel was an ugly, uncomfortable girl, a trouble to herself, and properly belovéd by none. But there is no one in the family who is more beloved or more in favour than she is. Never, through the power of God, did there take place a greater change than in her. Now it gives one pleasure to look at her and to be near her. Her features, it is true, have not improved themselves, nor has her complexion become particularly red-and-white; but she has become lovely, lovely from the heartfelt expression of affection and intelligence—beautiful from the quiet, unpretending grace of her whole being. Her only pretension is that she will serve all and help all; and thus has she inclined every one, by degrees, to her, and she is become the heart, the peace of the house; and, for herself, she has struck deep root down into the family, and is become happy through all these charms. She has attached herself, in the closest manner, to her sister Eva, and these two could not live separated from each other.

"You know the undertaking which these two sisters, while yet young, commenced together. You know also how well it succeeded; how it obtained confidence and stability, and how it won universal respect for its conductors, and how also, after a course of ten years—independent of this institution—they had realized a moderate income; so that they can, if they are so disposed, retire from it, and it will still continue to prosper under the direction of Annette H., who was taken as assistant from the beginning, and who in respect of character and ability has proved herself a person of rare worth. The name of the sisters Frank stood estimably at the head of this useful establishment; but it is a question whether it would have prospered to such an extent, whether it would have developed itself so beautifully and well without the assistance of a person who, however, has carefully concealed his activity from the eye of the public, and whose name, for that reason, was never praised. Without Assessor Munter's unwearied care and assistance—so say the sisters—the undertaking could never have gone forward. What a wonderful affectionate constancy lies in the soul of this man! He has been, and is still, the benefactor of our family; but if you would see and hear him exasperated, tell him so, and see how he quarrels with all thanks to himself. The whole city is now deploring that it is about to lose him. He is going to reside on his estate in the country, for it is impossible that he could sustain much longer the way in which he is at present overworked. His health has for some time evidently declined, and we rejoice that he can now take some rest, by which he may regain new strength. We all love him from our hearts—but I forget that I was to write about the daughters of the family.

"There is a peculiar little world in the house—a world into which nothing bad can enter—

where live flowers, birds, and Gabriele. The morning would lose its sweetest charms, if during the same Gabriele's birds and flowers did not play a part, and the evening twilight would be duskier if it were not enlivened by Gabriele's guitar and songs. Her flower-stand has extended itself by degrees into an orangery—not large to be sure, but yet large enough to shelter a beautiful vine, which is now covered with grapes, and many beautiful and rare plants also, so as to present to the family a little Italy, where they may enjoy all the charms of the south, in the midst of a northern winter. A covered way leads from the dwelling-house down into the orangery, and it is generally there that in winter they take their afternoon coffee. The aviary is removed thither; and there upon a table covered with a green cloth, lie works on botany, together with the writings of the Swedish gardening society, which often contain such interesting articles. There stand two comfortable armed chairs, on which the most magnificent birds and flowers are worked, you can easily imagine for whom. There my mother sits gladly, and reads or looks at her 'little lady' (she never grows out of this appellation) as she tends her flowers in the sun, or plays with her tame birds. One may say, in fact, that Gabriele strews the evening of her mother's days with flowers.

"A man dear to the Swedish heart has said, 'that the grand natural feature of northern life is a conquered winter,' and this applies equally to life individually, to family life, and to that of individual persons. It so readily freezes and grows stiff, snow so readily falls upon the heart; and winter makes his power felt as much within as without the house. In order to keep it warm within, in order that life may flourish and bloom, it is needful to preserve the holy fire ever burning. Love must not turn to ashes and die out; if it do, then all is labour and heaviness, and one may as well do nothing but—sleep. But if fire be borrowed from heaven, this will not happen; then will house and heart be warm, and life bloom incessantly, and a thousand causes will become rich sources of joy to all. If it be so within the house—then may it snow without—then, winter, thou mayest do thy worst!

"But I return to Gabriele, whose lively wit and joyous temper, united to her affectionate and innocent heart, make her deservedly the favourite of her parents, and the joy of every one. She asserts continually her own good-for-nothingness, her uselessness, and incorrigible love to a sweet '*far niente*,' but nobody is of her opinion in this respect, for nobody can do without her, and one sees that when it is necessary, she can be as decided and as able as any one need be. It is now some time since Gabriele made any charades. I almost fancy that the cause of this is a certain Baron Rudger L., who was suspected for a long time of having set fire to a house, and who now is suspected of a design of setting fire to a heart, and who with certain words and glances has put all sorts of whims into her head—I will not say heart.

"And so then we have nothing bad to say of 'this here Petrea,' as one of the friends of the house calls her. This Petrea has had all kind of botherations in the world: in the first place with her own nose, with which she could not

get into conceit, and then with various other things, as well within her as without her, and for a long time it seemed as if her own world would never come forth out of chaos.

"It has, however. With eyes full of grateful tears I will dare to say this, and some time I may perhaps more fully explain how this has been done. And blessed be the home which has turned back her wandering steps, has healed the wounds of her heart, and has offered her a peaceful haven, an affectionate defence, where she has time to rest after the storms, and to collect and to know herself. Without this home, without this influence, Petrea certainly might have become a witch, and not, as now, a tolerably reasonable person.

"You know my present activity, which, while it conducts me deeper into life, discovers to me more beauty, more poetry than I had ever conceived of it in the dreams of my youth. Not merely from this cause, although greatly owing to it, a spring has begun to blossom for me on the other side of my thirty years, which, were it ever to wither, would be from my own fault. And if even still a painful tear may be shed over past errors or present faults; if the longing after what is yet unattainably better, purer, and brighter, may occasion many a pang,—what matters it! What matter if the eye-water burn, so that the eye only become clear! if heaven humiliate, so that it only draws us upwards!

"One of Petrea's means of happiness is, to require very few of the temporal things of earth. She regards such things as nearly related to the family of illusions, and will, on that account, have as little as possible to do with them. And thus has she also the means of obtaining for herself many a hearty and enduring pleasure. I will not, however, be answerable for her not very soon being taken by a frenzy of giving a feast up in her garret, and thereby producing all kinds of illusions; such, for example, as the eating little cakes, the favourite illusion of my mother, and citron-soufflé, the almost perfect earthly felicity of 'our eldest,' in which a reconciliation skål with the frenzy-feast might be proposed to her beloved 'eldest.'

"If you would make a *summa summarum* of Petrea's state, it stands thus: that which was once a fountain of disquiet in her is now become a fountain of quiet. She believes in the truth of life. She does not allow her peace to be disturbed by accidental troubles, be they from within or from without; she calls them mist-clouds, passing storms, after which the sun will come forth again. And should her little garret tumble to pieces one of these days, she would regard even that as a passing misfortune, and hold herself ready, in all humility, to mount up yet a little higher.

"But enough of Petrea and her future ascension. One other daughter still dwelt in the family, and her lovely image lives still in the remembrance of all, but a mourning veil hangs over it; for she left home, but not in peace. She was not happy, and for many years her life is wrapped in darkness. People think that she is dead; her friends have long believed so, and mourned her as such; but one among them believes it not. I do not believe that she is dead. I have a strong presentiment that she will re-

turn; and it would gladden me to show her how dear she is to me. I have built plans for her future with us, and I expect her continually, or else a token where I may be able to find her; and be it in Greenland or in Arabia Deserta whence her voice calls me, I will find out a way to her.

"I would that I could now describe to you the aged pair, to whom all in the house look up with love and reverence, who soon will have been a wedded couple forty years, and who appear no longer able to live the one without the other—but my pen is too weak for that. I will only venture upon a slight outline sketch. My father is nearly seventy years old—but do you think he indulges himself with rest? He would be extremely displeased if he were to sleep any later in a morning than usual: he rises every morning at six, it being deeply impressed upon him to lose as little of life as possible. It is unpleasant to him that his declining sight compels him now to less activity. He likes that we should read aloud to him in an evening, and that—romances. My mother smilingly takes credit to herself for having seduced him to this kind of reading; and he confesses, with smiles, that it is really useful for old people, because it contributes to preserve the heart young. For the rest, he is in all respects equally, perhaps more, good, more noble-hearted than ever; and from that cause he is to us equally respect-inspiring and dear. O Ida, it is a happy feeling to be able intrinsically to honour and love those who have given us life!

"And now must I, with a bleeding heart, throw a mournful shadow over the bright picture of the house, and that shadow comes at the same time from a beautiful image—from my mother! I fear, I fear she is on the way to leave us! Her strength has been declining for two years. She has no decided malady, but she becomes visibly weaker and feebler, and no remedy, as yet, has shown itself availing for her. They talk now of the air of next spring—of Selzer-water, and a summer-journey; my father would travel to the world's end with her; they hope with certainty that she will recover; she hopes so herself, and says she would gladly live with us—that she is happy with us,—yet nevertheless there is a something about her, and even in her smiles, that tells me that she herself does not cherish full faith in the hope which she expresses. Ah! when I see daily her still paler countenance; the unearthly expression in her gentle features—when I perceive her ever-slower gait, as she moves about, still arranging the house and preparing little gratifications for her family; then comes the thought to me that she perhaps will soon leave us, and it sometimes is difficult to repress my tears.

"But why should I thus despair? Why not hope like all the rest? Ah, I will hope, and particularly for the sake of him who, without her, could no more be joyful on earth. For the present, she is stronger and livelier than she has been for a long time. The arrival of Louise and her family have contributed to this, as also another day of joy which is approaching, and which has properly reference to my father. She goes about now with such joy of heart, with the almanac in her hand, and prepares every thing, and thinks of every thing for the joyful festival.

My father has long wished to possess a particular piece of building land which adjoins our little garden, in order to lay it out for a great and general advantage; but he has sacrificed so much for his children, that he has nothing remaining wherewith to carry out his favourite plan. His children in the mean time have, during the last twelve years, laid by a sum together, and now have latterly borrowed what was wanting for the purchase of the land. On the father's seventieth birth-day, therefore, with the joint help of the 'Berserkers,' will the wooden fence be pulled down, and the genius of the new place, represented by the graceful figure of Gabriele, will deliver over to him the purchased deed, which is made out in his name. How happy he will be! Oh, it makes us all happy to think of it! How he will clear away, and dig, and plant! and how it will gladden and refresh his old age. May he live so long that the trees which he plants may shake their leafy branches over his head, and may their rustling foretell to him the blessing, which his posterity to the third and fourth generations will pronounce upon, his activity.

"I would speak of the circle of friends which ever enclosed our home most cordially, of the new Governor Sternhok and his wife, whom we like so much, and whose removal here was particularly welcome to my father, who almost sees a son in him. I would speak also of the servants of the house, who are yet more friends than servants—but I fear extending my letter to too great a length.

"Perhaps you blame me secretly for painting my pictures in colours too uniformly bright; perhaps you will ask, 'Come there then not into this house those little knocks, disturbances, rubs, overhastinesses, stupidities, procrastinations, losses, and whatever those spiritual mosquitoes may be called, which occasion by their stings irritation, unquiet, and vexation, and whose visits the very happiest families cannot avoid!'

"Yes, certainly. They come, but they vanish as quickly as they come, and never leave a poisonous sting behind, because a universal remedy is employed against them, which is called 'Forgive, forgive, amend!' and which, the earlier applied the better, and which makes also the visits of these fiends of rarer occurrence; they come, indeed, in pure and mild atmospheres never properly forth.

"Would you, dearest Ida, be convinced of the truth of the picture, come here and see for yourself. We should all like it so much. Come, and let our house provide for you the divertisement, perhaps also the rest which is so needful to your heart. Come, and believe me, Ida, when one observes the world from somewhat of an elevation—as, for instance, a garret—one sees illusions like mist, passing over the earth, but above it heaven vaulting itself in eternal brightness."

CHAPTER II.

A MORNING HOUR.

"Good morning!" said Jeremias Munter, as with his pocket full of books, he entered Petrea's garret, which was distinguished from all other

rooms merely by its perfect simplicity and its lack of all ornament. A glass containing beautiful flowers was its only luxury.

"Oh, you are heartily welcome!" exclaimed Petrea, as she looked with beaming eyes on her visitor and on his valuable appendages.

"Yes, to-day," said he, "I am of opinion that I am welcome! Here's a treat for Miss Petrea. Here, and here, and here!"

So saying, the Assessor laid one book after another upon the table, naming, at the same time, their contents. They belonged to that class of books which open new worlds to the eye of reflecting minds. Petrea took them up with a delight which can only be understood by such as have sought and thirsted after the same fountains of joy, and who have found them. The Assessor rejoiced quietly in her delight, as she looked through the books and talked about them.

"How good, how cordially good of you," said Petrea, "to think about me. But you must see that I also have expected you to-day;" and with eyes that beamed with the most heartfelt satisfaction, she took out of a cupboard two fine china plates, on one of which lay cakes of light wheaten bread, and on the other piled up the most magnificent grapes reposing amid a garland of their own leaves, which were tastefully arranged in various shades against the golden border of the plate. These Petrea placed upon a little table in the window, so that the sun shone upon them.

The Assessor regarded them with the eye of a Dutch fruit painter, and appeared to rejoice himself over a beautiful picture after his own manner.

"You must not only look at your breakfast, but you must eat it," said the lively Petrea; "the bread is home-baked, and—Eva has arranged the grapes on the plate and brought them up here."

"Eva!" said he, "now, she could not know that I was coming here to-day!"

"And precisely because she thought so as well as me, would she provide your breakfast;" with these words Petrea looked archly at the Assessor, who did not conceal a pleasurable sensation—broke off a little grape, seated himself, and—said nothing.

Petrea turned herself to her books: "Oh," said she, "why is life so short, when there is such an infinite deal to learn! Yet this is not right, and it evidences ignorance to imagine the time of learning limited; besides, this remark about the shortness of time and the length of art proceeds from the heathen writer Hippocrates. But let us praise God for the hope, for the certainty, that we may be scholars to all eternity. Ah, Mr. Munter, I rejoice myself heartily over the industrial spirit of our age! It will make it easy for the masses to clothe and feed themselves, and then will they begin also to live for mind. For true is that sentiment, which is about two thousand years old, 'When common needs are satisfied, man turns himself to what is more universal and exalted.' Thus, when the great week of the world is past, the Sabbath will commence, in which a people of quiet worshippers will spread themselves over the earth, no more striving after decaying treasures, but seeking after those which are eternal;

a people whose life will be to observe, to comprehend, and to adore, revering their Creator in spirit and in truth. Then comes the day of which the angels sung 'Peace on earth!'"

"Peace on earth!" repeated Jeremias, in a slow and melancholy voice, "when comes it! It must first enter into the heart; and there, there live so many demons, so much disquiet and painful longing—but what—what is amiss now!"

"Ah, my God!" exclaimed Petrea wildly, "she lives! she lives!"

"What! her! who lives! No, really, Petrea, all is not right with you," said the Assessor, rising.

"See! see!" cried Petrea, trembling with emotion, and showing to the Assessor a torn piece of paper, "see, this lay in the book!"

"Well, what then! It is indeed torn from a sepia picture—a hand strewing roses on a grave, I believe. Have I not seen this somewhere already?"

"Yes, certainly; yes, certainly! It is the girl by the rose-bush which I, as a child, gave to Sara! Sara lives! see, here has she written!"

The back of the picture seemed to have been scrawled over by a child's hand; but in one vacant spot stood these words, in Sara's own remarkably beautiful handwriting.

"No rose on Sara's grave!
Oh Petrea! if thou knew'st—"

The sentence was unfinished, whilst several drops seemed to prove that it had been closed by tears.

"Extraordinary!" said the Assessor: "these books which I purchased yesterday were bought in U. Could she be there! But—"

"Certainly! certainly she is there," exclaimed Petrea, "look at the book in which the picture lay—see, on the first page is the name, Sara Schwartz—although it has been erased. Oh! certainly she is in U., or there we can obtain intelligence of her! Oh, Sara, my poor Sara! She lives, but perhaps in want, in sorrow! I will be with her to-day if she be in U.!"

"That, Miss Petrea will hardly manage," said the Assessor, "unless she can fly. It is one hundred and two (English) miles from here to U."

"Alas, that my father should at this time be absent, should have the carriage with him; otherwise he would have gone with me! But he has an old chaise, I will take it—"

"Very pretty, indeed," returned he, "for a lady to be travelling alone in an old chaise, especially when the roads are spoiled with rain; and see what masses of cloud are coming up with the south wind—you'll have soaking rain the whole day through in the chaise."

"And if it rain pokers," interrupted Petrea, warmly, "I must go. O heaven! she was indeed my sister, she is so yet, and she shall not call on me in vain! I will run down to my mother in this moment and—" Petrea took her bonnet and cloak in her hand.

"Calm yourself a little, Miss Petrea," he said. "I tell you, you could not travel in this way. The chaise would not hold together. Alas, I have tried it myself—you could not go in it!"

"Now then," exclaimed Petrea determinately, "I will go; and if I cannot go I'll creep—~~but~~ go I will!"

"Is that then your firm determination?"

"My firm and my last."

"Well, then, I must creep with you!" said the Assessor, smiling, "if it be only to see how it goes with you. I'll go home now, but will be back in an hour's time. Promise me only to have patience for so long, and not without me to set off—creep off, I should say!"

The Assessor vanished, and Petrea hastened down to her mother and sisters.

But before her communications and consultations were at an end, a light travelling carriage drew up at the door. The Assessor alighted from it, came in, and offered Petrea his arm. Soon again was he seated in the carriage, Petrea by his side, and was protesting vehemently against the bag of provisions, and the bottle of wine, which Leonore thrust in, spite of his protestations, and so away they went.

CHAPTER III.

ADVENTURES.

It was now the second time in their life that the Assessor and Petrea were out together in such a manner, and now as before it seemed as if no favourable star would light their journey, for scarcely had they set out when it began to rain, and clouds as heavy and dark as lead gathered together above their heads. It is rather depressing when in answer to the inquiring glances which one casts upwards at the commencement of an important journey, to be met by a heaven like this. Other omens also little less fortunate added themselves; the horses pranced about as if they were unwilling to go farther, and an owl took upon itself to attend the carriage, set itself on the tree-branches and points of the palings by the wayside, and then on the coming up of the carriage flew a little farther, there to await its coming up at a little distance.

As the travellers entered a wood, where on account of the deep road they were compelled to travel slowly, they saw on the right hand a little black-gray old woman step forth, as ugly, witch, and Kobold-like in appearance as an old woman ever can be. She stared at the travellers for a moment, and then vanished among the trunks of the trees.

The Assessor shuddered involuntarily at the sight of her, and remarked; "What a difference is there between woman and woman—the loveliest upon earth and the most horrible is yet—woman!"

After he had seen the old witch he became almost gloomy. Perhaps in the mean time the owl vanished with her; perhaps, because "birds of a feather flock together."

Yet it may be that I am calumniating all this time the little old mother in the most sinful manner; she may be the most good-tempered woman in the world.

All this time Petrea sat silent, for however enlightened and unprejudiced people may be, they never can perfectly free themselves from the impression of certain circumstances, such as presentiments, omens, apparitions, and forebodings, which, like owls on noiseless wings, have flown through the world ever since the time of Adam, when they first shouted their ominous

"hul! hu!" People know that Hobbs, who denied the resurrection in the warmest manner, never could sleep in the neighbourhood of a room in which there had been a corpse. Petrea, who had not the least resemblance in the world to Hobbs, was not inclined to gainsay anything within the range of probability. Her temperament naturally inclined her to superstition; and like most people who sit still a great deal, she felt always, at the commencement of a journey a degree of disquiet as to how it would go on. But on this day, under the leaden heaven, and the influence of discomfiting forebodings, this inquiet amounted to actual presentiment of evil; whether this had reference to Sara or to herself, she knew not, but she was disposed to imagine the latter, and asked herself, as she often had done, whether she were prepared for any occasion which might separate her for ever from all those whom she loved on earth. By this means Petrea most livingly discovered—discovered almost with horror, how strongly she was fettered to her earthly existence, how dear life had become to her.

All human souls have their heights, but then they have also their morasses, their pits (I will not speak of abysses, because many souls are too shallow to have these). A frequent mounting upwards, or a most constant abode upon these heights, is the stipulated condition of man's proximity to heaven. Petrea's soul was an uneven ground, as is the case with most people; but there existed in her nature, as we have before seen, a most determined desire to ascend upwards; and at this time, in which she found her affections too much bound to earthly things, she strove earnestly to ascend up to one of those heights where every limited attraction vanishes before more extended views, and where every fettered affection will become free, and will revive in what is loftier. The attempt succeeded, succeeded by making her feel that whatever was most valuable in this life was intimately connected with that life which only first begins when this ends. Her lively imagination called forth, one after another, a great variety of scenes of misfortune and death; and she felt that in the moment before she resigned life, her heart would be able to raise itself with the words, "God be praised in all eternity."

With this feeling, and convinced by it that her present undertaking was good and necessary, whatever its consequences might be, Petrea's heart became light and free. She turned herself with lively words and looks to her travelling companion, and drew him, by degrees, into a conversation which was so interesting to them both, that they forgot weather and ways, forebodings, evil omens, and preparation for death. The journey prospered as well as any autumn journey could prosper. Not a trace of danger met them by the way. The wind slumbered in the woods; and in the public-houses they only heard one and another sleepy peasant open his mouth with a "devil take me!"

In the afternoon of the following day our travellers arrived, happily, at U. Petrea scarcely allowed herself time to take any refreshments before she commenced her inquiries. The result of all her and the Assessor's labours we give shortly thus:

It soon became beyond a doubt to them that

Sara, together with a little daughter, had been in the city, and had resided in the very inn in which Petrea and the Assessor now were, although they travelled under a foreign name. She was described as being in the highest degree weak and sickly; and, as might be expected in her circumstances, it appeared that she had besought the host to sell some books for her, which he had done. One of these books it was which, with its forgotten mark, had fallen into the hand of Petrea. Sara, on account of her debility, had been compelled to remain several days in that place, but she had been gone from there probably a week; and they saw by the Day-book* that it had been her intention to proceed thence to an inn which lay on the road to Petrea's native place; not, however, on the road by which they had travelled to U., but upon one which was shorter, although much worse.

Sara then also was on her way home, yes, perhaps, might be there already. This thought was an indescribable consolation for Petrea's heart, which, from the account she had received of Sara's condition, was anxious in the highest degree. But when she thought on the long time which had passed since Sara's journey from the city, she was filled with anxiety, and feared that Sara might be ill upon the road.

Willingly would Petrea have turned back again on the same evening to seek out traces of Sara; but care for her old friend prevented her from doing more than speaking of it. The Assessor, indeed, found himself unwell, and required rest. The cold and wet weather had operated prejudicially upon him, both mind and body. It was adopted as unquestionable that they could not continue the journey till the following morning.

The Assessor had told Petrea that this was his birthday, and perhaps it was this thought which caused him to be uncommonly melancholy the whole day. Petrea, who was infinitely desirous of cheering him, hastened, whilst he was gone out to seek an acquaintance, to prepare a little festival for his return.

With flowers and foliage which Petrea obtained, heaven knows how!—but when people are resolutely bent on anything they find out the means to do it—with these then, with lights, a good fire, with a table covered with his favourite dishes and such like, although in a somewhat disagreeable public-house room, such a picture of comfort and pleasantness was presented as the Assessor much loved.

Fathers and mothers, and all the members of happy families, are accustomed to birthday festivals, flower-garlands, and well-covered tables; but nobody had celebrated the birthday of the Assessor during his solitary wandering; he had not been indulged with those little flower-surprises of life—if one may so call them; hence it happened that he entered from the dark, wet street into this festal room with an exclamation of astonishment and heartfelt pleasure.

Petrea, on her part, was inexpressibly cordial, and was quite happy when she saw the pains

which she had taken to entertain her old friend succeed so well. The two spent a pleasant evening together. They made each other mutually acquainted with the evil omens and the impressions which they had occasioned, and bantered one another a little thereon; but decided positively that such fore-tokenings for the most part—betoken nothing at all.

As they separated for the night the Assessor pressed Petrea's hand with the assurance that very rarely had a day given him such a joyous evening. Grateful for these words, and grateful for the hope of soon finding again the lost and wept friend of her youth, Petrea went to rest, but the Assessor remained up late—midnight saw him still writing.

Man and woman! There is a deal, especially in romances, said about man and woman, as of separate beings. However that may be, human beings are they both—and as human beings, as morally sentient and thinking creatures, they influence one another for life. Their ways and manners, their gifts, are different; and it is this very difference which, by mutual benefits, and mutual endeavours to sweeten life to one another, produces what is so beautiful and so perfect.

The clearest sun brightened the following morning; but the eyes of the Assessor were troubled, as if they had enjoyed but little repose. Whilst he and Petrea were breakfasting, he was called out to inspect something relative to the carriage.

Was it now the hereditary sin of mother Eve, or was it any other cause which induced Petrea at this moment to approach the table on which the Assessor's money lay, together with papers ready to be put into a travelling writing-case. Enough! she did it—she did certainly what no upright reader will pardon her for doing, quickly ran her eyes over one of the papers which seemed just lately to have received from the pen impressions of thought; and—took it. Shortly afterwards the Assessor entered, and as it was somewhat late, he hastily put together his papers, and they set off on their journey.

The weather was glorious, and Petrea rejoiced like—nay, even more than a child, over the objects which met her eyes, and which, after the rain, stood in the bright sunshine, as if in the glory of a festive-day. The world was to her now more than ever a magic ring; not the perplexing, half-beathenish, but the purely Christian, in which every thing, every moment has its signification, even as every dewdrop receives its beaming point of light from the splendour of the sun. Autumn was, above all, Petrea's favourite season, and its abundance now made her soul overflow with joyful thoughts. It is the time in which the earth gives a feast to all her children, and joyous and changing scenes were represented by the way-sides. Here the corn-field raised to heaven its golden sheaves, and the harvesters sang; there, around the purple berries of the service-tree circled beautiful flocks of the twittering silktails; round the solitary huts, the flowering potatoe-fields told that the fruit was ripe, and merry little barefooted children sprang into the wood to gather bilberries. Petrea thanked heaven in her heart for all the innocent joys of earth. She thought of her home, of her parents, of her sisters, of Sara, who would soon again be one of their circle, and of how she

* A Day-book (Dagbok) is kept at every inn in Sweden. The name of every traveller who takes thence horses, and the name of the next town to which he proceeds, are entered in it; and thus, when on the trace, nothing could be easier than to discover such a traveller. The Day-book is renewed each month.—M. H.

(Petrea) would cherish her, and care for her, and reconcile her to life and happiness. In this blessed, beautiful morning hour, all thoughts clothed themselves in light. Petrea felt quite happy, and the joke which she thought of playing on her friend the Assessor, with the stolen piece of paper, contributed not a little to screw up her life's spirit to greater liveliness. "From the fulness of the heart the mouth speaketh," and Petrea involuntarily influenced her travelling companion so far that they both amused themselves with bombarding little children on the waysides with apples and pears, whereby they were not at all terrified.

They had now taken the same road upon which Sara travelled, and in the first inn at which they stopped, their hopes were strengthened; for Sara had been there, and had taken thence a horse to the next public-house.* All was on the way toward home. So continued it also at the three following stations; but at the fifth, they suddenly lost all traces of her. No one there had seen a traveller answering to her description, nor was her name to be found in the Travellers' Day-book. New and great uneasiness for Petrea! After some deliberation, she and the Assessor determined to return to the public-house whence they were just come, in order to discover clearly in what direction Sara had gone thence.

In the mean time the evening had come on, and the sun was descending as our friends were passing through one of the gloomiest woods in Sweden, and one in such ill-report that not long ago a writer speaking of it, said, "the forest shrouds memories as awful as itself, and monuments of murder stand by the wayside. Probably the mantle of the mountains falls not now in such thick folds as formerly, but yet there still are valleys where the stroke of the axe has never yet been heard, and rocky ranges which have never yet been smitten by the rays of the sun."

"Here two men murdered the one the other," said the postillion, with the gayest air in the world, whilst the carriage stopped to give the horses breath, on account of the heaviness of the road, and as he spoke he pointed with his whip to a heap of twigs and pieces of wood which lay to the left of the road, directly before the travellers, and which presented a repulsive aspect. It is customary for every passer-by to throw a stone or a piece of wood upon such a blood-stained spot, and thus the monument of murder grows under the continued curse of society. Thus it now stands there, hateful and repulsive amid the beautiful fir-trees, and it seemed as if the earth had given forth the ugliest of its mis-shaped boughs, and the most distorted of its twisted roots, wherewith to build up the heap. From the very midst of this abomination, however, a wild-rose had sprung forth and shot upwards its living twigs from among the dry boughs, whilst, like fresh blood-drops above the pile, shone its red berries illuminated by the sun, which now in its descent threw a path of light over the broad road.

* In Sweden, every traveller, be he poor or rich, must provide himself with his vehicle; he can hire nothing but horses from one station to another. It must not be imagined that Sara travelled with any state—most probably from what occurs afterwards, in a rude sort of peasant's car.—M. H.

"When this wild-rose is full of flowers," said Jeremias, as he regarded it with his expressive glance, "it must awaken the thought, that what the state condemns with justice, a Higher Power can cover with the roses of his love."

The sun withdrew his beams. The carriage set itself again in motion, but at the very moment when the horses passed the heap, they shied so violently that the carriage was backed into a ditch and overturned.

"Farewell life!" cried Petrea, internally; but before she herself knew how, she was out of the carriage, and found herself standing not at all the worse upon the soft heather. With the Assessor, however, it did not fare so well; a severe blow on the right leg made it impossible for him to support himself on it without great suffering. His old servant, who had acted as coachman on the journey, lay in a fainting fit at a few paces from him, bleeding profusely from a wound in the head, while the little post-boy stood by his horses and cried. Time and situation were not the most agreeable. The post-boy said that at about three quarters of a mile (English) there lay a peasant's hut in the wood by the road side; but it was impossible to induce him to run there, or under any condition to leave his horses.

"Let us wait," said the Assessor, patiently and calmly, "probably somebody will soon come by from whom we can beg assistance." They waited, but nobody came, and every moment the shades became darker; it seemed as if people avoided this horrible wood at this hour. Petrea, full of anxiety for her old friend, if he must remain much longer on the damp ground, and in the increasing coolness of evening, determined with herself what she would do. She wrapped up the Assessor and his old servant in every article of clothing of which she could gain possession, amongst which was her own cloak, rejoicing that this was unobserved by her friend, and then said to him decidedly, "now I go myself to obtain help! I shall soon be back again!" And without regarding the prohibitions, prayers, and threats with which he endeavoured to recall her, she ran quickly away in the direction of the hut, as the post-boy had described it. She hastened forward with quick steps, endeavouring to remove all thoughts of personal danger, and only to strengthen herself by the hope of procuring speedy help for her friend.

The haste with which she went compelled her after some time to stand still to recover breath. The quick motion which set her blood in rapid circulation, the freshness of the air, the beautiful and magnificent repose of the wood, diffused through her, almost in opposition to her own will and heart, an irresistible feeling of satisfaction and pleasure, which however quickly left her as she heard a something crackling in the wood. What could it be? perhaps an animal! Petrea held her panting breath. It crackled; it whistled; there were people in the wood! However bold, or more properly speaking rash, Petrea might be at certain moments, her heart now drew itself together, when she thought on her solitary, defenceless situation, and on the scenes of horror for which this wood was so fearfully renowned. Beyond this, she was now no longer in those years when one stands in life on a flying foot, careless and presumptuous;

she had planted herself firmly in life; had her own quiet room; her peaceful sphere of activity, which she now loved more than the most brilliant adventures in the world; it was not therefore to be wondered at, that she recoiled tremblingly from the unlovely and hateful which is at home by the road sides.

Petrea listened with a strongly beating heart; the rustling came nearer and nearer; for one moment she thought of concealing herself on the opposite side of the way, but in the next she boldly demanded "Who is there?"

All was still. Petrea strained her eyes to discover some one in the direction of the sound, but in vain: the wood was thick, and it had become quite dark. Once again, exclaimed Petrea, "If any one be there, let him come to the help of unfortunatè travellers!"

Even the heart of robbers, thought she, would be mollified by confidence; and prayers for help might remove thoughts of murder. The rustling in the wood began afresh, and now were heard the voices of—children. An indescribable sensation of joy went through Petrea's heart. A whole army, with Napoleon at their head, could not at this moment have given that feeling of security and protection which came from those children's voices; and soon came issuing from the wood two little barefooted human-creatures, a boy and a girl, who stared on Petrea with astonishment. She quickly made herself acquainted with them, and they promised to conduct her to the cottage, which lay at a little distance. On their way they gave Petrea bilberries out of their full birch-wood measure, and related to her that the reason of their being out so late was, that they had been looking for the cow which was lost in the wood; that they should have driven her home, but had not been able to find her; which greatly troubled the little ten-years-old girl, because, she said, the sick lady could not have any milk that evening.

While Petrea, led by her little guardian-angels, wandered through the wood—we will make a little flight, and relate what had occurred there a few days before.

A few days before, a travelling-car drove along this road, in which sat a lady and little girl. As they came in sight of a small cottage, which with its blossoming potatoe-field, looked friendly in the wood, the lady said to the peasant boy who drove, "I cannot go further! Stop! I must rest!" She dismounted, and crawled with his help to the cottage, and besought the old woman whom she found there for a glass of water, and permission to rest upon the bed for a moment. The voice which prayed for this was almost inaudible, and the countenance deathly pale. The little girl sobbed and cried bitterly. Scarcely had the poor invalid laid herself upon the humble and hardly clean bed, when she fell into a deep stupor from which she did not revive for three hours.

On her return to consciousness she found that the peasant had taken her things into the cottage; taken his horse out of the car and left her. The invalid made several ineffectual attempts during three days to leave the bed, but scarcely had she taken a few steps when she sunk back upon it; her lips trembled, and bitter tears flowed over her pale cheeks. The fourth day she lay quite still; but in the afternoon besought the old woman to procure her an honest and safe person, who, for a suitable sum would conduct the little girl to a

place which would be made known to him by a letter that would be given with her. The old woman proposed her brother's son as a good man, and one to be relied on for this purpose, and promised in compliance with the prayer of the sick woman to seek him out that same day and speak with him; but as he lived at a considerable distance, she feared that she should only be able to return late in the evening. After she was gone, the invalid took paper and a lead pencil, and with a weak and trembling hand wrote as follows:

"I cannot arrive—I feel it! I sink before I reach the haven. Oh, foster-parents, good sisters, have mercy on my little one, my child, who knocks at your door, and will deliver to you, my humble, my last prayer! Give to her a warm home, when I am resting in my cold one! See, how good she looks! Look at her young countenance, and see that she is acquainted with want—she is not like her mother! I fancy her mild features resemble hers whose name she bears, and whose angelic image never has left my soul.

Foster-mother, foster-father! good sisters! I had much to say, but can say only little! Forgive me! Forgive me the grief which I have occasioned you! Greatly have I erred, but greatly also have I suffered. A wanderer have I been on the earth, and have had nowhere a home since I left your blessed roof! My way has been through the desert; a burning simoom has scorched, has consumed my cheek—

"About to leave the world in which I have erred so greatly and suffered so much, I call now for your blessing. Oh, let me tell you that that Sara which you once called daughter and sister is yet not wholly unworthy! She is sunk deep, but she has endeavoured to raise herself; and your forms, like good angels, have floated around the path of her improvement.

"It will do your noble hearts good to know that she dies now repentant, but hopeful—she has fixed her humble hope upon the Father of Mercy.

"The hand of mercy cherished on earth the days of my childhood—later, it has lifted my dying head, and has poured into my heart a new and a better life; it has conducted me to hope in the mercy of heaven. Foster-father, thou who wast His image to me on earth—gentle foster-mother, whose voice perhaps could yet call forth life in this cold breast—have mercy on my child—call it your child!

"It never was my intention to come, as a burden, into your house. No; I wished only to conduct my child to your door—to see it open to her, and then to go forth—go forth quietly and die. But I shall not reach so far! God guide the fatherless and the motherless to you?

"And now farewell! I can write no more—it becomes dark before my eyes. I write these last words upon my knees. Parents, sisters, take my child to you! May it make you some time forget the errors of its mother! Pardon all my faults! I complain of no one.

"God reward you and be merciful to me!

"SARA."

Sara folded her letter hastily, sealed it and directed it, and then, enfeebled by the excitement, sank down beside her sleeping child, kissed her softly, and whispered, "for the last time!" Her feet and hands were like ice; she felt this icy coldness run through all her veins, and diffuse itself over her whole body; her limbs stiffened.

and it seemed to her as if a cold wind blew into her face.

"It is death!" thought Sara; "my death-bed is lonesome and miserable; yet—I have deserved no better. Her consciousness became ever darker; but in the depths of her soul combated still the last, perhaps the noblest powers of life—suffering and prayer. At length they too also became benumbed, but not for long, for new impressions waked suddenly the slumbering life.

It appeared to Sara as if angel voices had spoken and repeated her name, tender hands had rubbed her stiffened limbs with electrical fire; her feet were pressed to a bosom that beat strongly; hot drops fell upon them and thawed the icy coldness. She felt a heart throbbing against hers, and the wind of death upon her face vanished before warm summer breath, kisses, tears. Oh! was it a dream? But the dream became ever more living and clear. Life, loving, affectionate, warm life, contended with death, and was the victor! "Sara, Sara!" cried a voice full of love and anxiety, and Sara opened her eyes, and said, "Oh! Petrea, is it you?"

Yes, indeed, it was our poor Petrea, whose distress at Sara's condition, and whose joy over her now returning life, can neither of them be described. Sara took Petrea's hand, and conveyed it to her lips, and the humility of this action, so unlike the former Sara, penetrated Petrea's heart.

"Give me something to drink," prayed Sara with feeble voice. Petrea looked around for some refreshing liquid, but there was nothing to be found in the cottage excepting a jug containing a little muddy water; not a drop of milk, and the cow was lost in the wood! Petrea would have given her heart's blood for a few drops of wine, for she saw that Sara was ready to die from feebleness. And now, with feelings which are not to be told, must she give Sara to drink from the muddy water, in which, however, to make it more refreshing, she bruised some bilberries. Sarah thanked her for it as if it had been nectar.

"Is there any where in this neighbourhood a place where one can meet with people, and obtain the means of life?" asked Petrea from her little guide.

The little guide knew of none excepting in the village, and in the public-house there they could obtain every thing, "whatever they wished," said the child; to be sure it was a good way there, but she knew a footpath through the wood by which they might soon reach it.

Petrea did not stop thinking for a moment; and after she had encouraged Sara to courage and hope, she set out most speedily with the little nimble maiden on the way to the village.

The girl went first: her white head-kerchief guided Petrea through the duskiness of the wood. But the footway which the girl trode so lightly and securely, was an actual way of trial for Petrea. Now and then fragments of her clothes were left hanging on the thick bushes; now a branch which shot outwards seized her bonnet and struck it flat; now she went stumbling over tree-roots and stones, which, on account of the darkness and the speed of her flight, she could not avoid, and now bats flew into her face. In vain did the wood now elevate itself more majestically than ever around her; in vain did the stars kindle their lights, and send their beams into the deep gullies of the wood; in vain sang the water-falls in the quiet evening as they fell from the rocks. Petrea had now no thought for the beauty

of nature; and the lights which sparkled from the village, were to her a more welcome sight than all the suns and stars in the firmament.

And more lights than common streamed in pale beams through the misty windows of the public-house as Petrea came up to it. All was fermentation within it as in a beehive; violins were playing; the *polka* was being danced; women's gowns swung round; the walls hung with steam round about; iron-beeled shoes beat upon the floor, and the dust flew up to the ceiling. After Petrea had sought in vain for somebody outside the dancing-room, she was compelled to go in, and then she saw instantly that there was a wedding. The gilded crown on the head of the bride waved and trembled amid the attacks and the defence of the contending parties, for it was precisely the hot moment of the Swedish peasant wedding, in which, as it is said, the crown is danced off the head of the bride. The married women were endeavouring to vanquish and take captive the bride, while the girls were, on their part, doing their utmost to defend and hold her back. In the other half of the great room, however, all went on more noisily and more violently still, for there the married men strove to dance the bridegroom from the unmarried ones, and they pulled and tore and pushed unmercifully, amid shouts and laughter, while the *polka* went on its whirling measure.

It would be almost at the peril of her life that a delicate lady should enter into such a tumult; but Petrea feared in this moment no other danger than that of not being able to make herself heard in this wild uproar. She called and demanded to speak with the host; but her voice was perfectly swallowed up in the universal din. She then quickly turned herself, amid the contending and round-about-swinging groups, to the two musicians, who were scraping upon their fiddles with a sort of frenzy, and beating time with their feet. Petrea caught hold of one of them by the arm, and prayed him in God's name to leave off for a moment, for that her business was of life and death. But they paid not the slightest attention to her; they heard not what she said; they played, and the others danced with fury.

"That is very mad!" thought Petrea, "but I will be madder still!" and so thinking, she threw down upon the musicians a table which stood near them covered with bottles and glasses. With this crash, the music was suddenly still. The pause in the music astonished the dancers; they looked around them. Petrea took advantage of this moment, went into the crowd, and called for the host. The host, who was celebrating his daughter's wedding, came forward; he was a fat, somewhat puffy man, who evidently had taken a glass too much.

Petrea related summarily what had happened; prayed for people to assist at the carriage, and for some wine and fine bread for an individual. She spoke with warmth and determination; but nevertheless the host demurred, and the crowd, half intoxicated with drink and dancing, regarded her with a distrustful look. "The mad lady!" "It is the mad lady!" "No, no, it is not!" "Yes it is!"

And we must confess that Petrea's excited appearance, and the condition of her toilette after the fatigues of her wandering, gave some occasion for her being taken for a little crazy; this, and the circumstance of her being mistaken for another person, may explain the disinclination

to afford her assistance, which otherwise does not belong to the character of the Swedish peasantry.

Again Petrea exhorted best and peasant to contribute their help, and promised befitting reward.

The most set himself now in a commanding attitude, cleared his throat, and spoke with a self-satisfied air.

"Yes, yes," said he, "that's all right-good and handsome, but I should like to see something of this befitting reward before I put myself out of the way about overturned carriages. In the end, may be, one shall find neither one nor the other. One cannot believe everything that people say!"

Petrea recollected with uneasiness that she had no money with her; she however let nothing of that be seen, but replied calmly and collectedly, "You shall receive money when you come to the carriage. But for heaven's sake, follow me immediately, every moment's delay may cost a life!"

The men looked undecidedly one on another; but no one stirred from the place; a dull murmur ran through the crowd. Almost in despair, Petrea clasped her hands together and exclaimed, whilst tears streamed from her eyes, "Are you Christians, and yet can hear that fellow-creatures are in danger without hastening to help them?"

She mentioned the name and office of her father, and then went from prayers to threats.

Whilst all this was going on in the house, something was going on at the door, of which, in all speed, we will give a glimpse.

There drew up at the inn-door, a travelling-calash, accompanied by a small Holstein carriage in which sat four boys, the eldest of whom, probably ten years of age, and who, evidently greatly to his satisfaction, had managed with his own hands a pair of thin travelling horses. From the coach-box of the calash sprang nimbly a somewhat stout, jovial-looking gentleman, and out of the carriage came, one after another, other four little boys, with so many packets and bundles as was perfectly wonderful: among all these moved a rather thin lady of a good and gay appearance, who took with her own hands all the things out of the carriage and gave them into the care of a maid and the eldest of the eight boys; the youngest sat in the arms of his father.

"Can you yet hold something, Jacob?" asked the lady from one of the boys, who stood there loaded up to the very chin. "Yes, with my nose," replied he merrily; "nay, nay, dear mother, not the whole provision-basket—that's quite impossible!"

The mother laughed, and instead of the provision-basket, two or three books were put under the protection of the little nose.

"Take care of the bottles, young ones!" exhorted the mother, "and count them exactly; there should be ten of them. Adam, don't stand there with your mouth open, but hold fast and think about what you have in your hand, and what you are doing! Take good care of the bottle of mother's elixir! What a noise is there within! Does nobody come out? Come here my young ones! Adam, wait for David, wait! Jonathan, here! Jacob, Solomon, where are you? Shem and Seth, keep quiet!"

This was the moment when, by the opening of the door of the dancing-room, they became aware of the arrival of the travellers, and when the host

hastened out to receive them. Many followed him, and among the rest Petrea, who quickly interrupted her address to the peasants, in order, through the interposition of the travellers, as she hoped, to obtain speedier help.

"Oh! pardon me," cried she, in a voice which showed her agitation of mind; "I know not, it is true, who you are" (and the darkness prevented her from seeing it), "but I hope you are Christians, and I beseech of you, for heaven's sake—

"Whose voice is that?" interrupted a cheerful, well-toned, manly voice.

"Who speaks?" exclaimed Petrea in astonishment.

A few words were exchanged, and suddenly the names "Petrea! Jacobi! Louise!" flew exultingly from the lips of the three, and they locked one another in a heartfelt and affectionate embrace.

"Aunt Petrea! Aunt Petrea!" cried the eight boys in jubilation, and hopped around her.

Petrea wept for joy that she had not alone met with good Christians, but had hit upon her most Christian brother-in-law and Court-preacher, and upon "our eldest," who, with her hopeful offspring "the Berserkers," were upon their journey to the paternal house and the new personage.

A few minutes afterwards the carriage containing Petrea, Louise, and Jacobi, accompanied by peasants on horseback, drove away at full gallop into the wood, into whose gullies, as well as into Petrea's imploring eyes, the half-moon, which now ascended, poured its comfortable light.

We leave Petrea now with her relatives, who, on their homeward journey, fell in with her at the right moment to save her from a situation in the highest degree painful. We are perfectly sure that the Assessor received speedy assistance; that Sara was regaled with wine as well as with Louise's elixir; that Petrea's heart was comforted, and her toilette brought into order; and in confirmation of this our assurance we will quote the following lines from a letter of Louise, which on the next day was sent off home.

"I am quite convinced that Sara, with careful attention, befitting diet, and above all, by being surrounded with kindness, may be called back to life and health. But for the present she is so weak that it is impossible to think of her travelling under several days. And in any case, I doubt if she will come with us, unless my father come to fetch her. She says that she will not be a burden to our family. Ah! now it is a pleasure to open house and heart to her. She is so changed! And her child is—a little angel! For the Assessor it might be necessary on account of his leg that he go the city; but he will not leave Sara, who requires his help so greatly (his servant is out of all danger). Petrea, spite of all fatigues and adventures, is quite superb. She and Jacobi enliven us all. As things now stand we cannot fix decidedly the day of our arrival; but if Sara continue to improve, as appearances promise, Jacobi sets out to-morrow with the children to you. It is so dear with them all here in the public-house. God grant that we may all soon meet again in our beloved home!"

An hour after the receipt of this letter the Judge set off with such haste as if his life were concerned. He journeyed from home to the forest-village; we, on the contrary, reverse the journey, and take ourselves from the public-house to home.

CHAPTER IV.

THE HOME.

LILIES were blossoming in the house on the beautiful morning of the twentieth of September. They seemed to shoot up of themselves under Gabriele's feet. The mother, white herself as a lily, went about softly in her fine morning-dress with a cloth in her hand wiping away from mirror or table the smallest particle of dust. A higher expression of joy than common animated her countenance; a fine crimson tinged her otherwise pale cheeks, and the lips moved themselves involuntarily as if they would speak loving and joyful words.

Bergstrom adorned ante-room and steps with foliage and splendid flowers, so that they represented a continuation of garlands along the white walls; and not a little delighted was he with his own taste, which Gabriele did not, at all, omit to praise. But although an unusually great deal of occupation pervaded the house this morning, still it was nevertheless unusually quiet; people only spoke in low voices, and when the least noise was made the mother said, "Hush! hush!"

The cause of this was, that the lost but again-found child slept in the house of her parents.

Sara had arrived there the evening before, and we have passed over this scene, for the great change in her, and her shaken condition had made it sorrowful; yet we wish indeed that the feeling reader had seen the manly tears which flowed down the cheeks of the Judge, as he laid the found-again daughter on the bosom of her mother! We should like to have shown him the unfortunate one, as she rested with her hands crossed over her breast, on the snow-white couch, over which the mother herself had laid the fine coverlet; have shown him how she looked upon the child whose bed stood near her own; upon the beloved ones, who full of affection surrounded her—and then up to heaven, without being able to utter one word! And how glad should we have been could we have seen the Jacobian pair this evening in the paternal home, and how there sate eating, round them, Adam and Jacob, the twin brothers of Jonathan and David, ditto Shem and Seth, with Solomon and little Alfred. They were well-trained children, and looked particularly well, all dressed alike, in a blouse of dark stuff, over which fell back the white shirt collar, leaving free the throat with its lively tint of health, whilst the slender waist was girded with a narrow belt of white leather. Such was the light troop of "the Berserkers."

But we return to our bright morning hour. Eva and Leonore were in the garden, and gathered with their own hands some select apples and pears, which were to ornament the dinner table. They were still glittering with dew, and for the last time the sun bathed them with purple by the song of the bulfinch. The sisters had spoken of Sara; of the little Elise, whom they would educate; of Jacobi—and their conversation was cheerful; then they went to other subjects.

"And to-day," said Leonore, "your last answer goes to Colonel R.—your last, no! And you feel quite satisfied that it should be so?"

"Yes, quite!" returned Eva, "how the heart changes! I cannot now conceive how I once loved him!"

It is extraordinary how he should still solicit your hand, and this after so long a separation.

He must have loved you much more than any of the others to whom he made court."

"I do not think so, but—ah, Leonore! do you see the beautiful apple there? It is quite bright. Can you reach it? No? Yes, if you climb on this bough."

"Must I give myself so much trouble?" asked Leonore; "that is indeed shocking! Well, but I must try, only catch me if I should fall!"

The sisters were here interrupted by Petrea, whose appearance showed that she had something interesting to communicate.

"See, Eva," said she, giving to her a written piece of paper, "here you have something for morning-reading. Now you must convince yourself of something of which till now you would not believe. And I shall call you a stock, a stone, an automaton without heart and soul, if you do not—yes, smile! You will not laugh when you have read it. Leonore! come dear Leonore, you must read it also, you will give me credit for being right. Read, sisters, read!"

The sisters read the following remarks in the handwriting of the Assessor.

"Happy is the lonely and the lowly! He may ripen and refresh himself in peace!"* Beautiful words, and what is better, true.

"The foundling has proved their truth. He was sick at heart, and sinned; but he belonged to the lowly and to the unnoticed, and so he could be alone; alone in the fresh, quiet wood, alone with the Great Physician, who only can heal the wounds of the heart—and it is become better with him.

"Now I begin to understand the Great Physician, and the regimen which he has prescribed for me. I feared the gangrene selfishness, and would drink of the nectar of love; but he said, 'Not this draught, but that of self-denial—it is more purifying.

"I have drunk it. I have loved her for twenty years without pretension and without hope.

"To-day I have passed my three-and-sixtieth year; the increasing pain in my side commands me to leave the steps of the patients, and tells me that I have not many more paces to count till I reach my grave. May it be permitted to me to live the remainder of my days more exclusively for her!

"At the 'Old Man's Rose' will I live for her—for it stands in my will that it belongs to her, to her, Eva Frank.

"I will beautify this country-seat for her. I will plant there beautiful trees and flowers for her; vines and roses will I bring there. Old age will some time seize on her, wither her, and consume her. But then, 'the rose of age' will bloom for her, and the odour of my love bless her, when the ugly old man wanders on the earth no more. She will take her sisters to her there, there hear the songs of the birds, and see the glory of the sun upon the lovely objects of nature.

"I will repose on these thoughts during the solitary months or years that I must pass there. Truly, many a day will be heavy to me; the long evening solitary; truly, it were good to have there a beloved and gentle companion, to whom one might say each day 'Good morning, the sun is beautiful;' or in whose eyes—if it

* From the Book of the Rose (Tornroosén's Bok), this is the general title of a collection of romances, novels, and dramas, by Almqvist, an intellectual, and at the same time one of the most fertile of the living Swedish writers.

were not so—one could see a better sun;—a companion with whom one could enjoy books, nature—all that God has given us of good; whose hand, in the last heavy hour one could press, and to whom one could say, 'Good night! we meet again—to-morrow—with love itself—with God!'

"But—but—the foundling shall find no home upon earth!"

"Now, he will soon find another home, and will say to the master there, 'Father, have mercy on my rose!' and to the habitation of men will he say, 'Wearisome wast thou to me, O world, but yet receive my thanks for the good which thou hast given me!'"

When the sisters had ceased to read, several bright tears lay upon the paper, and shone in the light of the sun. Leonore dried her eyes, and turning herself to Petrea, inquired, "But Petrea, how came this paper into your hands?"

"Did I not think you would ask!" said Petrea. "You should not ask such difficult questions, Leonore. Nay, now Eva's eyes are inquiring too—and so grave. Do you think that Mr. Munter has put it into my hands? Nay, he must be freed from that suspicion even at my expense. You want to know how I came by this paper? Well then—I stole it—stole it on our journey—on the very morning after it was written."

"But Petrea! but Petrea!"

"Yes, you good ones! it is too late now to cry, 'but, Petrea!' now you know the Assessor's secret; and you—may your consciences command you, mine is hardened—you may start before my act, and be horrified; I don't ask about it. The whole world may excommunicate me—I don't trouble myself!—Eva! Leonore! Sisters!"

"Dearest Petrea," returned Eva, "this is after all no surprise to me: I have long been aware of these sentiments; I have reflected deeply and seriously on what will be best to do—and this shall be the end of all plots and surprises we will all of us join in making his future home happy; he shall never feel the weight of solitude, nor the greater weight of believing himself unbeloved."

Petrea laid an arm round the neck of each sister, kissed them, smiling with a tear in her eye, and vanished.

Somewhat later in the morning we find Eva and Gabriele on a visit at the beautiful parsonage-house immediately in the vicinity of the city, where Mrs. Louise is in full commotion with all her goods and chattles, whilst the little Jacobis rioted with father and grand-father over fields and meadows. The little four-years-old Alfred, an uncommonly lively and amiable child, is alone with the mother at home; he pays especial court to Gabriele, and believing that he must entertain her, he brings out his Noah's Ark to introduce to her, in his low, clear, young voice, Ham and Hamina, Shem and Shemina, Japhet and Japhetina.

After all how-do-ye-do's between the sisters had been answered, Gabriele loosened the paper from a basket which Ulla had brought in, and asked Louise to be pleased to accept some roast veal and patties. "We thought," said she, "that you would need something fresh, after the journey, before you get your store-room in order, *Just taste a patty! they are filled with mince-*

meat, and I assure you are baked since the Flood."

"Really!" replied Louise laughing, "they are delicate too! See, there's one for you, my little manikin; but another time don't come and set yourself forward and look so hungry! Thanks! thanks, dear sister! Ah, how charming that we are come again into your neighbourhood! How fresh and happy you all look! And Petrea! how advantageously she has altered; she is come to have something quiet and sensible about her; she has outgrown her nose, and dresses herself neatly; she is just like other people now. And see—here I have a warm, wadded morning-dress for her, that will keep her warm up in her garret; is it not superb? And it cost only ten thalers courant.*

"O, extraordinary—out of the common way! Quite unheard of!" said they, "is it not so?—why it is a piece of clothing for a whole life!"

"What a beautiful collar Eva has on! I really believe she is grown handsomer," said Louise. "You were, and are still the rose of the family, Eva; you look quite young, and are grown stout. I, for my part, cannot boast of that; but how can anybody grow stout when they have eight children to work for! Do you know sisters, that in the last week before I left Stockholm, I cut out a hundred and six shirts! I hope I can meet with a good seamstress here at home; look at my finger, it is quite hard and horny with sewing. God bless the children! one has one's trouble with them. But tell me how is it with our mother? They have always been writing to me that she was better—and yet I find her terribly gone off; it really grieves me to see her. What does Mr. Munter say?"

"Oh," replied Gabriele warmly, "he says that she will recover. There is really no danger; she improves every day."

Eva did not look so hopeful as Gabriele, and her eyes were filled with tears as she said, "When autumn and winter are only over, I hope that the spring—"

"And do you know," interrupted Louise with animation, "what I have been thinking of? In the spring she shall come to us and try the milk cure; she shall occupy this room, with the view towards the beautiful birch grove, and shall enjoy the country air, and all the good things which the country affords, and which I can obtain for her—certainly this will do her good. Don't you think that she will then recover? Don't you think that it is a bright idea of mine?"

The sisters thought that really it was bright, and Louise continued:

"Now I must show you what I have brought for her. Do you see these two damask breakfast cloths, and these six breakfast napkins?—all spun in the house. I have had merely to pay for the weaving. Now, how do they please you?"

"O excellently! excellently!" said one sister.

"How very handsome! How welcome they will be!" said the other.

"And you must see what I have bought for my father—ah, Jacobi has it in his carpet-bag—one thing lies here and another there—but you will see it, you will see it."

"What an inundation of things!" said Gabriele, laughing. "One can see, however, that there is no shortness of money."

* About ten shillings English. But then ten shillings of English money have a very different amount of value in Sweden and England.—M. H.

"Thank God!" said Louise, "all is comfortable in that respect, though you may very well believe that it was difficult enough at first; but we began by regulating the mouths according to the dishes. Ever since I married I have had the management of the money. I am my husband's treasurer; he gives over to me whatever comes in, and he receives from me what he wants, and in this way all has gone right. Thank God, when people love one another all does go right! I am happier than I deserve to be, with such a good, excellent husband, and such well-disposed children. If our little girl, our little Louise, had but lived! Ah, it was a happiness when she was born, after the eight boys; and then for two years she was our greatest delight. Jacobi almost worshipped her; he would sit for whole hours beside her cradle, and was perfectly happy if he only had her on his knee. But she was inexpressibly amiable—so good, so clever, so quiet, an actual little angel! Ah! it was hard to lose her. Jacobi grieved as I have never seen a man grieve; but his happy temperament and his piety came to his help. She has now been dead above a year. Ah! never shall I forget my little girl!"

Louise's tears flowed abundantly; the sisters could not help weeping with her. But Louise soon collected herself again, and said, while she wiped her eyes, "Now we have also anxiety with little David's ankles: but there is no perfect happiness in this world, and we have no right to expect it. Pardon me that I have troubled you; and now let us speak of something else, while I get my things a little in order. Tell me something about our acquaintance—*aunt Evelina* is well?"

"Yes, and sits as grandmother of five nephews at *Axe-holm*, beloved and honoured by all. It is a very sweet family that she sees about her, and she has the happiest old age."

"That is pleasant to hear. But she really deserved to be loved and honoured. Is her *Karie* also married?"

"Ah, no! *Karie* is dead! and this has been her greatest sorrow; they were so happy together."

"Ah, thou Heaven! Is she dead? Ah, yes, now I remember you wrote to me that she was dead—Look at this dress, sisters—a present from my dear husband; is it not handsome? and then quite modern. Yes, yes, dear *Gabriele*, you need not make such an ambiguous face: it is very handsome, and quite in the fashion, that I can assure you. But, *à propos*, how is the Court-Preacher? Exists still in a new form, does it? Now that is good! I'll put it on this afternoon on purpose to horrify *Jacobi*, and tell him that for the future I intend to wear it in honour of his nomination to the office of court-preacher."

All laughed.

"But tell me," continued Louise, "how will our 'great astonishment' go on? how have you arranged it?"

"In this manner," returned one of the sisters. "We shall all meet for a great coffee-drinking in the garden, and during this we shall lead the conversation in a natural sort of way to the piece of ground on the other side of the fence, and then peep through the cracks in it, and then express that usual wish that this fence might come down. And then, at this signal, your eight boys, Louise, are to fall on the fence and—"

"How can you think," said Louise—"to be sure my boys are nimble and strong, but it would require the power of Berserkers to—"

"Don't be alarmed," answered the sister laughing, "the fence is sawn underneath, and stands only so firm that a few pushes will produce the effect—the thing is not difficult. Besides, we'll all run to the attack, if it be needful."

"O heaven help us! if it be only so, my young ones will soon manage the business—and *à propos*! I have a few bottles of select white sugar beer* with me, which would certainly please my father, and which will be exactly the right thing if we—as is customary on such occasions, have to drink healths."

During this conversation little Alfred had gone round ineffectually offering two kisses, and was just on the point of growing angry because his wares found no demand, when all at once, summoning resolution, he threw his arms round *Gabriele's* neck, and exclaimed, "Now I see really and thoroughly, that *aunt Gabriele* has need of a kiss!" And it was not *aunt Gabriele's* fault if the dear child was not convinced how wholly indispensable his gift was.

But Louise still turned over her things.—"Here," said she, "I have a waistcoat for *Bergström*, and here a neck-kerchief for *Ulla*, as well as this little brush with which to dust mirrors and tables. Is it not superb? And see, a little pair of bellows, and these trifles for *Brigitta*."

"Now the old woman," said the sisters, "will be happy! She is now and then out of humour, but a feast of coffee, and some little present, reconcile her with all the world; and to-day she will get both."

"And see," continued Louise, "how capital-ly these bellows blow: they can make the very worst wood burn—see how the dust flies!"

"Uh! one can be blown away oneself," said *Gabriele* laughing.

While the sisters were still occupied with cleaning and dusting, and Louise was admiring her own discoveries, the Judge came in, happy and warm.

"What a deal of business is going forward!" exclaimed he laughing. "I must congratulate you," said he, "Louise, your boys please me entirely. They are animated boys, with intellects all alive—but at the same time, obedient and polite. Little David is a regular hair-brain, and a magnificent lad—what a pity it is that he will be lame."

Louise crimsoned from heart-felt joy over the praise of her boys, and answered quickly to the lamentation over the little David, "You should hear father, what a talent he has for the violin-cello; he will be a second *Gehrman*."

"Nay, that is good," returned the Judge, "such a talent as that is worth his two feet. But I have hardly had time to notice you properly yet, Louise. Heavens! its glorious that you are come again into our neighbourhood; now I think I shall be able to see you every day! and you can also enjoy here the fresh air of the country. You have got thin, but I really think you have grown!"

Louise said laughingly, that the time for that was over with her.

The sisters also, among themselves, made their observations on Louise. They were rejoiced to see her, among all her things, so exactly herself again.

Handsome she certainly had not become—

* A sort of effervescing beer, resembling our pop or ginger beer; sweet and bitter at the same time.—M. R.

but people cannot grow handsomer to all eternity. She looked well and she looked good, had no more of the cathedral about her; she was an excellent Provost's lady.

We place ourselves now in Sara's chamber.

When a beloved and guiltless child returns, after sufferings overcome, to the bosom of parents into a beloved home, who can describe the sweet delight of its situation? The pure enjoyment of all the charms of home; the tenderness of the family; the resigning themselves to the heavenly feeling of being again at home? But the guilty—

We have seen a picture of the prodigal son which we shall never forget! It is the moment of reconciliation; the father opens his arms to the son; the son falls into them and hides his face. Deep compunction of the heart bows down his head, and over his pale cheek—the only part of his countenance which is visible, runs a tear—a tear of penitence and pain, which says everything. The golden ring may be placed upon his hand: the fatted calf may be killed and served up before him—he cannot feel gay or happy—embittering tears gush forth from the fountains of memory.

Thus was it with Sara, and exactly to that degree in which her heart was really purified and ennobled. As she woke out of a refreshing sleep in her new home, and saw near her, her child sleeping on the soft snow-white bed; as she saw all, by the streaming-in light of the morning sun so festally pure and fresh; as she saw how the faithful memory of affection had treasured up all her youthful predilections; as she saw her favourite flowers, the asters, standing upon the stove, in an alabaster vase; and as she thought how all this had been—and how it now was—she wept bitterly.

Petrea, who was reading in the window of Sara's room waiting for her awaking, stood now with cordial and consoling words near her bed.

"Oh, Petrea!" said Sara, taking her hand and pressing it to her breast, "let me speak with you. My heart is full. I feel as if I could tell you all, and you would understand me. I did not come here of my own will—your father brought me. He did not ask me—he took me like a child, and I obeyed like a child. I was weak; I thought soon to die; but this night under this roof has given me strength. I feel now that I shall live. Listen to me, Petrea, and stand by me, for as soon as my feet will carry me I must go away from here. I will not be a burden to this house. Stained and despised by the world, as I am, I will not pollute this sanctuary! Already have I read aversion towards me in Gabriele's look. Oh, my abode here would be a pain to myself! Might my innocent little one only remain in this blessed house. I must away from here! These charms of life; this abundance, they are not for me—they would wake anguish in my soul! Poverty and labour beseech me! I will away hence. I must!—but I will trouble nobody: I will not appear ungrateful. Help me, Petrea—think for me; what I should do and where I should go!"

"I have already thought," replied Petrea.

"Have you?" said Sara, joyfully surprised, and fixed upon her searchingly her large eyes.

"Come and divide my solitude," continued Petrea, in a cordial voice. "You know that I, although in the house of my parents, yet live for myself alone, and have the most perfect

freedom. Next to my room is another, a very simple but quiet room, which might be exactly according to your wishes. Come and dwell there. There you can live perfectly as you please; be alone, or see only me, till the quiet influence of calm days draw you into the innocent life of the family circle."

"Ah, Petrea," returned Sara, "you are good, but you cannot approach a person of ill-report, and you do not know—"

"Hush, hush," interrupted Petrea; "I know very well, because I see and hear you again. Oh, Sara, who am I that I should turn away from you! God sees into the heart, and he knows how weak and erring mine is, even if my outward life remain pure, and if circumstances and that which surrounds me have protected me, and have caused my conduct to be blameless. But I know myself, and I have no more earnest prayer to God than that: 'Forgive me my trespasses.' May I not pray by your side? Cannot we tread together the path which lies before us? Both of us have seen into many depths of life; both of us now look up humbly to the cheerful heaven. Give me your hand; you were always dear to me, and now, even as in the years of childhood do I feel drawn to you. Let us go, let us try together the path of life. My heart longs after you; and does not yours say to you that we are fit for one another, and that we can be happy together?"

"Should I be a burden to you?" said Sara: "were I but stronger, I would wait upon you; could I only win my bread by my hands, as in the latter years I have done; but now—"

"Now give yourself up to me blindly," said Petrea. "I have enough for us both. In a while, when we are stronger, we will help one another."

"Will not my wasted life—my bitter remembrances make my temper gloomy and me a burden?" asked Sara, "and do not dark spirits master those who have been so long in their power?"

"Penitence," said Petrea, "is a goddess—she protects the erring. And if a heathen can say this, how much more a Christian!—O, Sara! annihilating repentance itself—I know it—can become a strength for him, by which he can erect himself. It can raise up to new life; it can arouse a will which can conquer all things—it has raised me erect—it will do the same for you! You stand now in middle life—a long future is before you—you have an amiable child; have friends; have to live for eternal life! Live for these! and you will see how, by degrees, the night vanishes; the day ascends, and all arranges itself and becomes clear. Come, and let us two unitedly work at the most important business of life—improvement!"

Sara, at these words raised herself in the bed, and new beams were kindled in her eyes. "I will," said she; "Petrea, an angel speaks through you; your words strengthen and calm me wonderfully—I will begin anew—"

Petrea pressed Sara to her breast, and spoke warm and heartfelt "thanks," and then added softly, "and now be a good child, Sara!—all weak and sick people are children. Now, submit, calmly and resignedly, to be treated and guided like such a one; gladden by so doing, those who are around you, and who all wish

you well! We cannot think of any change before you are considerably better—it would trouble every one."

At this moment the door was opened, and the mother looked in inquiringly; she smiled so affectionately as she locked Sara in her arms. Leonore followed her; but as she saw Sara's excited state of mind, she went quickly back and returned with a plate covered with all kind of good things; and now cheerful and merry words emulated one another to divert the again-found-one; old modes of speech were again reverted to, and old acquaintances renewed.

"Do you know Madame Folette again? She has been lately repaired. Can she have the honour of giving you a cup of coffee? There is your old cup with the stars; it was saved with Madame Folette from the fire, and the little one here with the rose-buds is allotted to our little Elise. You must really taste these rusks—they never were in the Ark—they came with the blushing morning out of the oven. Our 'little lady' has herself selected, and filled the basket with the very best for you; you shall see whether these home-baked would not please even the Assessor;"—and so on.

In the mean time the little Elise had awoken, and looked with bright blue eyes up to great Elise, who bent down to her. They were really like each other, as often daughter's daughters and grandmothers are, and appeared to feel related already. When Sara saw her child in Elise's arms, tears of pure joy filled her eyes for the first time.

I do not know whether my lady-readers have nerves to stand by, while "the Berserkers" overthrew the garden-fence. I fancy not; and therefore, with my reader's permission, I make a little leap over the great event of the day—the thrown-down wooden fence, which fell so hastily that the Berserkers themselves tumbled all together over it,—and go into the new piece of land, where we shall find the family-party assembled, setting on a flower-decorated moss-seat, under a tall birch tree, which waved over them its crown, tinged already with autumnal yellow. The September sun, which was approaching its setting, illuminated the group, and gleamed through the alders on the brook, which softly murmuring among blue creeks, flowed round the new piece of land, and at once beautified and bounded it.

Tears shone in the eyes of the family-father; but he spoke not. To see himself the object of so much love; the thoughts on the future; on his favourite plan; fatherly joy and pride; gratitude towards his children—towards Heaven, all united themselves to fill his heart with the most pleasurable sensations which can bless a human bosom.

The mother, immediately after the great surprise, and the explosion of joy which followed it, had gone into the house with Eva and Leonore. Among those who remained behind, we see the friend of the family Jeremias Munter, who wore on the occasion the grimmest countenance in the world; the Baron L. who was no more the wild extravagant youth, but a man, and beyond this, a landed-proprietor, whose grave demeanour was beautified by a certain agreeable sobriety, particularly visible when he

spoke with Gabriele, at whose feet he was seated.

Louise handed about white-sugar beer, which nobody praised more highly than herself. She found that it had something unearthly in it, something positively exalting; but when Gabriele, immediately after she had drank a half glass, gave a spring upwards, "our eldest" became terrified, for such a strong working of her effervescing white-beer she had by no means expected. Nevertheless she was soon surrounded by the eight, who cried altogether, "Mother, may I have some beer?" "And I too?" "And I!" "And I too!" "And I!" "And I?" "Send a deal of foam for me, mamma dear!"

"Nay, nay, nay, dear boys! people must not come clamouring and storming thus—you don't see that I or the father do so. Solomon must wait to the very last now. Patience is a good herb. There, you have it; now drink, but don't wet yourselves!"

After the little Jacobis had all enjoyed the foaming, elevating liquor, they became possessed by such a buoyant spirit of life, that Louise was obliged to command them to exhibit their mighty deeds at a distance. Hereupon they swarmed forth on journeys of discovery, and began to tumble head over heels round the place. David hobbled along with his little crutch over stock and stone, whilst Jonathan gathered for him all sorts of flowers, and plucked the bilberry plants, to which he pointed with his finger—little nose-gays were then made out of them, with which they overwhelmed their aunts, especially Gabriele, their chosen friend and patron. The serious Adam, the eldest of the eight, a boy of exceedingly staid demeanour, sat quietly by the side of his grandfather, and appeared to consider himself one of the elderly people; the little Alfred hopped about his mother.

The Judge looked around him with an animated countenance; he planted alleys and hedges; set down benches and saw them filled with happy people, and communicated his plans to Jacobi.

Jeremias observed the scene with a bitter, melancholy, and to him, peculiar smile. As little David came limping up to him with the fragrant wood-flowers, he exclaimed suddenly, "Why not rather make here a botanic garden than a common park? Flowers are indeed the only pleasant thing here in the world, and because people go all about snuffing with the nose, it might be as well to provide them with something to smell at. A water-establishment also could be united with it, and thus something miserable might get washed away from the pitiable wretches here in this world."

The Judge seized on the idea with joy. "So we will," said he, "we will unite pleasure with profit. This undertaking will cost more than a simple public pleasure ground, but that need not prevent it. In this beautiful time of peace, and with the prospect of its long continuance, people may take works in hand, and hope to complete them, even if they should require a long time."

"And such works," said Jacobi, "operate ennoblingly on life in times of peace. Peace requires even as great a mass of power as war, but against another kind of foe. Every enno-

being of this earthly existence, everything which exalts the mind to a more intellectual life, is a battery directed against the commoner nature in man, and is a service done to humanity and one's native land."

"Bah!" cried Jeremias, with vexation, "humanity and native land! You have always large words in the mouth—if a fence is thrown down a bush planted; it is immediately called a benefit for one's native land. Plant your fields and throw down your fences, but let the native land rest in peace! for it troubles itself just as little about you, as you about it. For one's country and humanity!—that should sound very affecting—all mere talk!"

"No, now you are in fact too severe," said the Judge, smiling at the outbreak of his friend; "and I, as far as regards myself," continued he, gravely, but cheerfully, "wish that a clearer idea of one's country accompanied every step of human activity. If there be a love which is natural and reasonable, it is the love of one's country. Have I not to thank my country for everything that I have! Are they not its laws, its institutions, its spiritual life, which have developed by whole being, as man and as a citizen! And are they not the deeds of my fathers which have fashioned these; which have given them their power and their individual life! In fact, love and gratitude towards one's parents, is no greater duty than love and gratitude towards one's native land; and there is no one, be he man or woman, high or low, but who, according to his own relationships, can and must pay this holy debt. And this is exactly the significance of a christianly constituted state, that every one shall occupy with his pound so as to benefit, at the same time, both the individual and the community at large."

"Thus," added Petrea, "do the raindrops swell the brook, which pours its water into the river, and may, even though it be nameless, communicate benefit in its course."

"So it is, my dear child," said her father, and extended to her his hand.

"It is a gladdening thought," said Louise, with tearful eyes. "Pay attention, Adam, to what grandfather and aunt say, and keep it in your mind;—but don't open your mouth so wide; a whole frigate could sail into it."

At these words little Alfred began to laugh so shrilly and so heartily that all the elderly folks irresistibly bore him company. Adam laughed too; and at the sound of this peal of laughter came bounding forward from all ends and corners Shem and Seth, Jacob and Solomon, Jonathan and David, just as a flock of sparrows comes flying down over a handful of scattered corn. They came laughing because they heard laughter, and wished to be present at the entertainment.

In the mean time the sun had set, and the cool kobolds of evening began to wander over the place, as the family, amid the most cheerful talk, arose in order to return to the house. As they went into the city the ball on St. Mary's church glimmered like fire in the last beams of the sun, and the moon ascended like a pale but gentle countenance over the roof of their house. There was a something in this appearance which made a sorrowful impression on Gabriele. The star of the church tower

glittered over the grave of her brother, and the look of the moon made her involuntarily think on the pale, mild countenance of her mother. For the rest, the evening was so lovely, the blackbird sang among the alders by the brook, and the heaven lay clear and brightly blue over the earth, whilst the wind and every disturbing sound became more and more hushed.

Gabriele walked on, full of thought, and did not observe that Baron L. had approached her; they were almost walking together as he said, "I am very glad; it was very pleasant to me to see you all again so happy!"

"Ah, yes," answered Gabriele, "now we can all be together again. It is a great happiness that Louise and her family are come here."

"Perhaps," continued the Baron, "perhaps it might be audacity to disturb such a happily united life, and to wish to separate a daughter and sister from such a family—but if the trust—"

"Ah!" hastily interrupted Gabriele, "don't speak of disturbing anything, of changing anything—every thing is so good as it now is!"

He was silent, with an expression of sorrow.

"Let us all be happy together," said Gabriele, bashfully and cordially; "you will stop some time with us. It is so charming to have friends and sisters—this united life is so agreeable with them."

The Baron's countenance brightened. He seized Gabriele's hand, and would have said something, but she hastened from him to her father, whose arm she took.

Jacobi conducted Petrea; they were cheerful and confidential together, as happy brother and sister. She spoke of him, of her present happiness, and of the hope which made up her future. He took the liveliest interest in it, and spoke with her of his plans; of his domestic happiness; and with especial rapture of his boys; of their obedience to the slightest word of their parents; of their mutual affection to each other—and see—all this was Louise's work! And Louise's praise was sung forth in a harmonious duet—ever a sweet scent for "our eldest," who appeared however to listen to no one but her father.

They soon reached home. The mother stood with the silver ladle in her hand, and the most friendly smile on her lips, in the library, before a large steaming bowl of punch, and with look and voice bade the entering party welcome.

"My dear Elise," said the Judge embracing her, "you are become twenty years younger."

"Happiness makes one young," answered she, looking on him affectionately.

People seated themselves.

"Don't make so much noise children!" said Louise to her eight, seating herself with the little Elise on her knees; "can't you seat yourselves without so much noise and bustle?"

Jeremias Munter had placed himself in a corner, and was quiet, and seemed depressed.

Stillness pervaded the assembly; the glasses were filled, and the skat began.

No. 1, which the Judge proposed, was "for the old friend, Jeremias Munter, on this last evening which he spends with us as our townsman—and may blessings follow him to his new home!" which was drunk with the warmest evidences of affection, and with tearful eyes.

No. 2, which Jacobi spoke eloquently, was, "for the Parents; for their happiness and well-being," said he with emotion, "through which I, and so many others as well as I, will be blessed!"

No. 3, was drank to the prosperity of the new Pastor's family.

No. 4, for the new purchased land.

No. 5, for the old—ever-new Home.

No. 6, was "the health of all good children!"

The eight seemed as if they could not return thanks enough.

Before long, the voice of Mother Louise was heard saying, "Nay, nay, children, you must not drink a drop more! What do you say, my little David! A thee-and-thou toast with Mr. Munter! No thank you greatly, my dear fellow, you can propose that another time! You have drunk to-day toasts enough—more perhaps than your little heads can carry."

"I beg for the boys," said the Assessor in his most friendly voice, "I will propose a skal, and they must drink it with me. Fill, yet once more, the glasses!—I propose a skal for peace! peace in our country, and peace in our homes! A skal for love and knowledge, which alone can make peace a blessing! A skal, in one word, for—Peace upon Earth!"

"Amen! amen!" cried Jacobi, drank off his glass and threw it behind him. Louise looked at her mother somewhat astonished, but the mother followed Jacobi's example; she too was carried away.

"All glasses to the ground after this skal!" cried the Judge, and sent his, cover and all, smashing on the floor. With an indescribable pleasure the little Jacobis threw their glasses up, and endeavoured to make the skal for Peace as noisy and tumultuous as possible.

We leave now the joyful circle, from which we have seen the mother softly steal away. We see her go into the boudoir, where, reposing in

comfortable quiet she writes the following lines to her friend and sister.

"I have left them now for a few minutes, in order to rest, and to say a few words to you, my Cecilia. Here it is good and quiet, and joyful voices—truly, festival voices, echo to me here. The heart of my Ernst enjoys the highest pleasure, for he sees all his children happy around him. And the children—Cecilia, he has reason to be joyful over them and proud; they stand all around him, good and excellent human beings; they thank him that existence has been given to them, and that they have learned its worth; they are satisfied with their lot. The lost, and again-found-one has come home, in order to begin a new life, and her charming child is quite established on the knees of the grandfather.

"I hear Gabriele's guitar accompanied by a song. I fancy now they dance. Louise's eight boys make the floor shake. Jacobi's voice is heard above all. The good, ever-young man! I also should be joyful, for all in my house is peaceful and well-arranged. And I am so; my heart is full of thankfulness, but my body is weary—very weary.

"The fir trees on the grave wave and beckon me. I see their tops saluting me in the clear moonlight, and pointing upwards. Dost thou beckon me, my son! Dost thou call me to come home to thee! My first-born, my summer-child! Let me whisper to thee that this is my secret wish. The earth was friendly towards me; friendly was my home; when thou wast gone, my favourite! I began to follow. Perhaps the day of my departure is at hand. I feel in myself as if I were able to go to rest. And might a really bright and beautiful moment be enjoyed by me before my last sleep, I would yet once more press my husband's hand to my lips, look around me on earth with a blessing, and upwards towards heaven with gratitude, and say as now, out of the depths of my heart, 'Thank God for the home here, and for the home there!'"

THE END.



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